



Greater Olney Civic Association

Post Office Box 212 Olney, Maryland 20830

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

GOCA MEETING - December 12, 2000

The meeting was called to order by President Michael Kelley. Following introductions, the agenda was approved with no additions or deletions. and the minutes were approved with 3 corrections, the amount in the treasury, that Mike Kelley gave the Transportation Report-not Dave Eskenazi, and that Mike was omitted from the list of attendees. There were no Public Comments.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Preliminary Plans for the Olney Theatre Expansion - Mike introduced Gus Bauman, the attorney for Bill Miller, the developer of the restaurant/inn on the 4 acres adjacent to the Theatre property. Gus gave a brief overview and then turned to presentation over to Steve Kaufman, attorney for the Olney Theatre. Steve described the current preliminary plan which was prepared and will be submitted to Park and Planning (P&P) jointly by the Theatre and Miller - as they had been directed to do by P&P.

Steve noted that the proposal for the restaurant/inn is now back to the size that had been proposed originally - 31 sleeping rooms and 185 seat inn and pub. He added that it was important to the Theatre to have access to the property from Old Vic. It is viewed as the main entrance for traffic coming from the west, particularly after Batchellors Forest is realigned. They are hoping that a light will be installed at that intersection at that time too. The Theatre will go ahead with or without Miller to build the new Theatre and rehearsal hall. The restaurant/inn will operate year round. The Theatre does not now operate all year round, but it will be They had concluded that the best way to preserve the interrelationship between the Theatre and the restaurant/inn and to maintain the control the Theatre would like would be through a condominium agreement. The final terms of that agreement have not been worked out yet, but must be before the preliminary plan can be approved.

Some of the points made during the discussion were as follows:

- Joe Hess noted that State Highway Administration's (SHA) approach has been to not put in traffic signals until it is "warranted" as defined in nationwide engineering standards. He also thought it was too close to the both the Old Baltimore/108 and Dr. Bird/108 intersections for another light.
- Dave Eskenazi noted that the Lake Hallowell homeowners were concerned about the visibility from Old Vic at its intersection with Rte 108 and he asked what steps they would be willing to take to improve the visibility there, particularly since he did not expect the realignment of Batchellors Forest to happen anytime soon. Steve Kaufman indicated that it that is an issue they will look into it, and added that they had not heard about this problem before. Their engineer can do a sight distance study . The berming is quite high there, and they can take a look at it.
- People were not happy with the design of the "ring" road, particularly where it breaks up in the rear of the property. Steve noted that the Theatre would prefer a better flow as well. The break in the road comes near the parking for the restaurant/inn. The road will not be completed before the construction of the new theatre. Miller will be behind the Theatre in the development process about 9-12 months The Theatre will build its part of the road, and then Miller will build his once he begins his construction. The engineer indicated that some of the reason for the disruption in the road is the parking for the restaurant/inn. They need to provide a certain number of spaces and are having difficulty doing that. The road is intended to have two-way traffic. The resident in the first house on Old Vic is concerned about the amount of traffic will use the Old Vic entrance. The engineer indicated that they would look at ways to minimize the use of that entrance. Miller suggested that the design of the ring road was a way to slow traffic down.
- To date they have not worked out any agreement with respect to maintenance and changes in the plan, but all of that will be worked out. Steve added that the two partners could go ahead separately if they cannot work out an agreement in a reasonable time frame. They have State and County money that the Theatre could lose if they are delayed too long.
- Gus noted that after this process they will go back for detailed site plan development.
- Many of the trailers parked in the back of the Theatre are used for storage and they are hoping to move some of that stuff into the

basement of the new theatre. Dave Eskenazi asked for a commitment that they not put any storage trailers on the side of the lot near the residences. Steve did not see that as being a problem.

- Another issue they are looking at is the use of shared parking to meet their requirements for parking space since he times of their use will be different.
- The new theatre will seat 400 and will be 25,000 sq. ft. The existing theatre had 800 seats, but has been reconfigured to 400, so the total number of seats is still 800 in the two venues. The recital hall will be 25,000 sq. ft.
- There are 4 entrances. There will be full entrances at Old Vic and at the light on Rte. 108 at Dr. Bird, and two right in and out only entrance at the east and west ends of the property on Rte. 108.
- The square footage of the inn will likely change from what shown on the original plans. Gus indicated that they did not know where the square footage came from. They cannot build rooms of adequate size with the original square footage, so the square footage will increase. It was suggested that they could do fewer sleeping rooms. The Old Vic residents will oppose the size of the inn being larger.
- There will be berming at the rear of the property as buffering between the property and the houses behind it. They will look at regrading the berming at the corner of Rte. 108 and Old Vic.
- The new main stage will be about the same height as the existing theatre- about 60 ft. tall and will face Rte. 108. The building will follow the drop in grade as the land moves away from Rte. 108. It will be about 150 ft. from Rte. 108. The existing theatre is on higher ground, a couple of hundred feet further back from the road. When asked if the building could be sunk down lower, Debra and Steve Kaufman both indicated they did not think so. Debra added that the appearance of the theatre is key to them, particularly since they are in the Arts themselves. They are mindful of the making this an attractive building, one with a pastoral look that fits the rural character of the area and is not there anymore. One suggestion was that it might be more important to make sure the building is attractive than necessarily making it lower. They are trying to save the most beautiful part of the lot and have uncrowded it as much as possible. The building will also be a buffer for the amphitheater. The engineer indicated that the larger trees on the site will also serve as a buffer. Steve Kaufman noted that this is really a site plan issue and when they are working on the design of the buildings they will look at it carefully. The engineer noted that the Theatre should not be visible from the first floor of the adjacent houses.
- Steve Kaufman agreed to provide a rendering similar to the one presented at this meeting when they return with the site plan that will show the buildings from the street grade.
- The engineer indicated that the green area on the east end of the property cannot be used for parking because it is part of a conservation area on the site.
- Steve Kaufman did not know if the development being shown on this plan is the maximum they can build. He added that the Theatre might want to cover the amphitheater, but that is very much down the road.
- An Arden Woods resident was concerned about what terms or conditions would be included in the condominium agreement with respect to the restaurant/inn being sold some time in the future in order to maintain the integrity of the Planned Cultural zone. Steve added that this was important to the Theatre as well, and, in all fairness to Miller, he would want the same with the Theatre.
- Jim Folk noted that the rehearsal hall will be site planned, but there are no funds for construction now. The Theatre will site plan all the structures they plan to build, but with a phasing plan. The main stage and the lobby will be in the 1st phase.
- The engineer met with the Lake Hallowell HOA to discuss storm water management. There will be 2 treatment centers that will feed into a culvert that goes under Old Vic. A resident noted that they have already had some degradation since Rte. 108 was widened, and asked if their engineer could check to see why as they design their new systems. He indicated that he would even though they are not required to and give them some advice on how to address the problem. They will be retaining some of the water on site.
- Miller indicated that the elevation of the restaurant/inn is lower than the theatre. They are trying to give it the look of the old Olney Inn that burned down in the early 70's. It will be 35-40 ft. to the top of the roof, certainly under 50 ft. He also agreed to provide an at grade rendering of the building. Miller did not think that his building would be visible from Rte. 108.

- When asked that their lighting be directed away from the adjacent houses, Miller indicated that this is also a site plan issue. The engineer indicated that they will have to do a illumination plan as part of the site plan process.
- The property right on the corner of Rte. 108 and Old Vic is zoned as a Transfer of Development Rights -2 receiving area that means it can be developed with a density of 2 units per acre. They still anticipate it will be developed residentially, but don't have any specific plans right now. P&P asked their position on rezoning it to the PCC zone and they indicated they may want to develop with houses.
- They do not know what the surface of the parking lot will be yet, possibly gravel or stone. An Old Vic resident asked that it be paved because of the dust that comes off of the gravel and stone coverings.
- None of the adjacent property owners got copies of this latest plan and Gus indicated he would get them to them.
- Gene Counihan, President of the Theatre's Board of Director, has had a 30 year association with the Theatre. He attended a GOCA meeting last year when an earlier plan was presented, and he was very impressed with the questions that were raised. He is very excited about this plan and they are ambitiously raising money for its construction. He sees the Theatre as a place to go to to relax and he wants to keep it that comfortable feel. The Theatre has had a 50 year relationship with the community and want to maintain that relationship. He indicated that he had come to this meeting to hear our concerns, not to get our support; and he encouraged us to include any of our concerns in our comments to P&P.

Jim Folk moved that:

GOCA SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION HE INTRODUCED (COPY ATTACHED) THAT INCLUDED 10 CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL SIMILAR TO WHAT HE THOUGHT THE LAKE HALLOWELL HOA WOULD BE PASSING, TO WHICH TO 3 POINTS WERE ADDED: (1) SIGHT LINES AT OLD VIC AND RTE. 108 BE IMPROVED, (2) THE HEIGHT AND MASS OF THE BUILDINGS IS A CONCERN, SIMILAR TO THOSE WITH THE VICTORY HOUSING STRUCTURE, AND (3) WANT TO SEE THE HEIGHT AND MASS OF THE BUILDING RELATIVE TO RTE. 108 AND OLD VIC.

The motion was seconded by Dave Eskenazi.

- Rick Coburn was not as concerned with the square footage of the inn, but that they build something that is economically viable that could contribute to the community. Rather than limiting them to the square footage to this earlier amount. He recognizes that 35,000 sq.ft. could be a concern, but he wants the whole area to be something we can be proud of and wouldn't want to put artificial barriers in the way.
- Miller plan is to use the 13,500 sq. foot limit as the size of the footprint of the building and then build up 2-3 stories. They want to be held to the number of sleeping units - 31, not to the square footage. They do not know exactly how the inn will be designed. It may be that people go into the lobby of the Theatre, and then can either go to the rooms or to the theatre. Jim Folk noted that they have had lots of discussion within the Lake Hollowell HOA and with P&P and the original number is a number they agreed to. People bought their homes thinking that the inn would be a certain size and do not want to see it so much bigger. Jim added that he had done some research on the internet about country inns and found that most had less than 30 rooms and that if the footprint is 13,500 sq. ft and is 2-3 stories high, we are talking about a building that is 26,000-39,000 sq. feet - a substantial increase.

Following the discussion Ed Weisel, who felt we needed to consider some of the points more before acting on the motion, particularly since we would have another meeting before the hearing date, moved that:

JIM FOLK'S MOTION BE TABLED TILL NEXT MONTH.

The motion was seconded by Edward Partington, and passed.

Ron Berger noted that our next meeting was so close to the date of the hearing, that our comments would not have as much impact as they would if we could get our comments to the P&P staff in time for inclusion in the package of information give to the Board members prior to their discussion. He suggested that the officers could draft the letter after the Lake Hollowell HOA finalized their response that outlined, more generally, the areas of concern we have about the plan; and moved that:

GOCA WRITE A LETTER OUTLINING OUR SUPPORT OF THE OLNEY THEATRE PROJECT IN GENERAL WITH A NUMBER OF CONCERNS ABOUT THE SIZE OF SOME OF THE BUILDINGS, THE ALIGNMENT OF THE RING ROAD, PROXIMITY OF THE RESTAURANT/INN TO ADJACENT PROPERTIES, AND WITH EGRESS AND ACCESS TO THE SITE.

The motion was seconded by Ed Weisel, and after a brief discussion, passed.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORT

Treasurer's Report: Roy Peck reported that there was no change since his last report in November. We have a balance of approximately \$2,000 with an outstanding bill of \$1,600.

Transportation Report: Dave Eskenazi reported:

- Jim Folk is working with SHA on having 2 left turning lanes from Dr. Bird onto Rte. 108 and on the Old Vic sight line issue.
- There was a public hearing on the proposed improvements to the Rte97/28 intersection. We suggested minimizing the overpass on Georgia Ave north of Rte. 28. And, if possible that the interchange be an underpass under Rte. 28 so there would be less of an impact on The Preserve.
- About a month ago, a number of people went on a field walk of the proposed alignment of the Brookeville Bypass. The current alignment address all the issues GOCA had with the earlier proposed options. The road will be at grade, but the road may span over Brookeville Rd. It will be minimized so that it is not elevated too high as it nears Islander Rd. It will be about as far from the Olney houses as possible. They are using a traffic circle to minimize the impact on the ballfields in front of Longwood Recreation Center.

OLD BUSINESS

Olney Community Center - Helene Rosenheim reported that the Olney Community Center Task Force, hoping to get a joint facility for the Library, the police substation, the Mid-County Services Center Olney Satellite Office, and the Olney Chamber office and Visitors Center, is making progress. She, Paula Kahla, and Elaine Barkley met with George Griffen, a special assistant to County Executive Doug Duncan to present our proposal. He was receptive to the idea, asked some questions about other options we might have considered, such as leasing space in a shopping center for some of the uses like the police and the Mid-County office. He seemed satisfied that we had explored those options sufficiently. He indicated he would talk with Natalie Cantor, and Harriet Henderson to be sure they were supportive of the project and then would have the Facilities staff take an initial look at the feasibility of this project and viability of the sites we were considering. Independent of that, Natalie has contacted the acting head of the Facilities staff to ask them to look at the sites. Before they had done anything, a new head was selected for the Facilities staff and he asked that we provide him with tax maps of the areas in questions so he could direct his staff to look at the sites. Helene is getting that map.

Mike Kelley had also gotten a call from Council member Steve Silverman asking for a meeting with all or some of the Task Force members to learn more about this project. We are not certain how he learned about it. Paula, Mike, Elaine, Helene, and Ron Berger will attend that meeting.

Helene is drafting a letter to Samuel Riggs as a follow up to the phone conversation Roy Mead had with him several months ago. Roy gave him a brief idea of what we were proposing and asked if he'd be interested in donating some funds to this project. Mr. Riggs had asked that we send more details. The letter will give an overview of our plans and ask him to contact us if he is interested in setting up a meeting so we can give him more detailed information.

Victory Housing Project on Norbeck Road - Cary Lamari noted that the Planning Board had recommended denial of the special exception application for Victory Housing assisted living project at Ednor Rd and New Hampshire Ave. Victory Housing is now proposing to build this project on Norbeck Rd on the site owned by ManorCare. The property is on the north side of Norbeck just past the entrance to Leisure World. This project is on some sort of fast track and there will be a hearing before Park and Planning in a few days. They are now proposing 162 units - 132 2-bedroom units and 30 assisted living units.

Cary's major concern is the safety of the citizens on site and in adjacent properties. Norbeck Road is already overburdened, there is a curve in the road right at that point, there is no shoulder along there, and there are 9,000 senior citizens living at the adjacent Leisure World property. There is no community interaction between this property and adjacent properties. There are no sidewalks. The storm water management pond is in the 100 year flood plain.

The Manor Care project had consisted of a 109 bed facility initially. Cary's Association had not opposed this plan, but they did not offer any support for the project and they felt it was out of character for the area that their new Master Plan had recommended be developed residentially. The plan was changed to a 67-bed Alzheimer's facility with no burden on traffic on Norbeck.

The Victory Housing project is being processed on an emergency schedule, in weeks vs. the 6-9 months a project like this would normally take. Cary felt that Norbeck is a major east-west road in Olney and if something is being done on a property along this road, it needs to be done with concern for safety. He recommended that the project be reduced to 90 units - 60 w-bedroom units and 30 assisted living units, as had been proposed in the earlier project proposed for the Cloverly area, with an entrance to Norbeck Boulevard, not directly onto Norbeck Road and a sidewalk to the Bailey's Road development adjacent to the project, and with storm water management that has capacity for the 100 year flood as provided in the earlier project. He noted that in the PRC zone in Leisure World the roads have 12 ft. lanes to increase safety for the elderly drivers and there were sidewalks connecting all the sections and was developed at 10 units per acre. Dave Eskenazi noted that the St. Andrew Kim Victory Housing project is 76 1-bedroom units on 5 acres. This is even more massive than this.

Cary felt that this had become a very politicized. Duncan and many of the Council members were acting from a concern that there is not enough affordable elderly housing in the County and are less concerned with where this type of housing is built and the compatibility with the surrounding years. The project had received a grant from Duncan and they had received a 30-year property tax waiver. There is going to be a special exception hearing on this site, and the Board of Appeals has not given an opinion on the Cloverly project yet. Cary noted that Marty Klauber, the People's Counsel felt that the scale was too large on this project and that there was an issue of due process involved here. Cary indicated that he was seeking GOCA's opposition to this application and for support of their recommendation. He noted, too, that Leisure World was not interested in integrating this project into their other developments.

Khalid Afzal, the head of the Georgia Avenue team at P&P had 2 concerns about the project. One was the building bulk, and the other was the compatibility of this project with the surrounding community. He noted they have modified the design so that it is further from adjacent properties. The staff will recommend approval with a number of conditions, including reducing the bulk of the building. They are waiting for the trip generation study, but the Planning Board wants to take a position on this project. He noted that the Board of Appeals will make a decision on December 20th.

After a brief discussion, Michel Kay moved that:

GOCA OPPOSE THE VICTORY HOUSING PROJECT ON NORBECK ROAD BECAUSE (1) WE DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO PROPERLY ADDRESS THE ISSUES, AND (2) DUE TO TRAFFIC CONCERNS ON NORBECK ROAD.

The motion was seconded by Ron Berger and passed.

NEW BUSINESS

GOCA Officer Elections - Ron Berger noted that we would be introducing the slate of the 2000 slate of officers at the January meeting for our elections in February. Mike Kelley is not eligible to run for President again, because he is in his 2nd term now. He will be checking with the other officers to see what they want to do next year and will also be looking for new blood. Dave Eskenazi encouraged those not officers consider taking this on. A lot of work gets done outside of the regular meetings. Mike Kelley noted that the new president can rely on a lot of help from a number of past presidents who have stayed very involved after their terms of office were over.

Following a few announcements, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Helene Rosenheim
Recording Secretary

People in Attendance:

Roy Peck, Michael Kay, Terri Hogan (Gazette), Bill Thewes, Michael Kay, Ellen Bogage, Rich Kopanda, Joe Hess, Edward Partington, Rick Coburn, Ed Weisel, Dave Eskenazi, Khalid Afzal, Bill Miller, Gus Bauman, Steve Kaufman, Debra Kraft, Gene Counihan, Ed Wallington, Norman Strickman, Jim and Liz Folk, Cary Lamari, John Clifford, Ron Berger, Don Schmelter, Polly Knight, and Helene Rosenheim.