



Greater Olney Civic Association

Post Office Box 212 Olney, Maryland 20830

www.goca.org

MINUTES – December 10, 2002

The meeting was called to order by President Art Brodsky. Approval of the minutes was tabled to the next meeting. The agenda was approved with two additions under New Business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Joe Hess countered the suggestion made at the last meeting that road speeds be reduced by 10 miles per hour as a way to reduce the number of accidents with deer. Mr. Hess noted that in the 15-19 years since he moved to Olney they have gone from seeing 2-3 deer once every 2-3 months to seeing 10-15 a day. He added too that in our area deer have no natural predators and, according to Rob Gibbs, the M-NCPPC deer expert, deer only seldom migrate more than 2-3 miles from where they were born. He felt that all that slowing the speed would do is create more congestion on the roads that would lead to more roads being built and would not protect the deer. What is really needed is the kind of controlled hunts that the Park Police organized. The difficulty in the southeast Olney area is that hunting is against the law south of Rte. 108, so they cannot have the hunts there.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Welcoming Capt Patricia Walker to Mont. Co. Police Dept District 4 – Capt Walker stated how pleased she was to return to District 4 (formerly Wheaton/Glenmont) after having been here as a Lieutenant with John King from 1997-1999. Dee Walker was a Lieutenant there then as well. She noted, however, she did not know the Olney area well yet. In her years with the Department she has had a diversity of experiences. She has worked at the Detention Center, supervised a child abuse team, which was the most difficult thing she has done, worked on a swat team, and worked for 13 years on the conflict resolution team – a love of hers - including several years as a supervisor. She brings enthusiasm and a can-do attitude, and a number of years of investigative experience. She believes in community policing. She has been in the job for about 2 months, but a month of that was involved in the sniper incident.

On January 26th, the District will be going through a redeployment plan. They will be going from 8 beats to 6 beats. This is good news for Olney. The John 3 and John 4 beats that used to encompass Olney will become John 1 and John 2, and will have 2 dedicated sergeants, 2 corporals, and teams of officers under each sergeant. Within the John sector, these officers and their staffs, barring an emergency situation, will work exclusively within the John 1 and John 2 beats. The sergeants will be Don Johnson, and Ed Harhai who has been in District 4 for a number of years but is new to the Olney area. Scott Brown will continue as the traffic sergeant.

Paulette Bowles reported that the plans for the Olney satellite facility expansion are done. Permitting Services had required a number of small changes to the plans, but they should have the permits in about 2 weeks. They are adding a 9' x 14' addition to the rear of the trailer that will go into the hill behind it and will include an office and a bathroom. The trailer is currently being used by officers as a place to write reports, but there are no roll calls there. Once it has a bathroom facility, she expects it will be used more. The new office will free up the space Sgt. Johnson used as an officer and will provide the officers with a more confidential area to work in so they do not have to shut down their computers anytime someone enters the trailer. There are still volunteers there 3 days a week.

The following points were made during a question and answer period:

- Response times should be shorter than they are currently. It will be good to have beat teams when they have enough staffing. But now the staffing levels are at the sector level with 2 beats. Officers in the sector will only work in the sector. They now have 2 shifts with Friday as an overlap day. This will be spread out into more shifts so they will have overlaps on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

- Wendy Walker noted that the Olney Chamber of Commerce has been collecting funds for the trailer expansion for a number of years, including the \$10,000 provided by Chief Moose from the Police Department. However, they cannot give it directly to the Police Department. They need to find a foundation who will process the money. When they started this with Capt John King, they established the Montgomery County Police Foundation to handle donated funds for the Police Department. This seemed like a good vehicle for our purposes. However, there had been a breakdown in communication between the Chamber and the Foundation that resulted in the Foundation not wanting to continue to process our donations. She is currently working with the Police budget staff to find a resolution to this problem, but they are currently waiting for Capt. King to return from training to work out some of the details of the resolution. In the meantime the Chamber is holding the money in a separate account that is never

mingled with Chamber funds. The Montgomery County Community Foundation, the County's Revenue Authority, and possibly the Wheaton/Olney Neighborhood Network were suggested as possible organizations that may be able to assist with this problem and they will be looked into. It was also suggested that they look into how the Chamber was able to obtain the trailer to begin with and a similar mechanism might be used to disburse the existing funds. There is currently \$32,000 in the fund, including the money provided by Chief Moose. Most of that is in cd's at the Sandy Spring Bank.

- With respect to efforts to slow traffic in the town center area, Capt. Walker noted that the County has a new traffic analyst, Felicia Todd who is just beginning to get a full understanding of the traffic statistics in this area. She has told Capt. Walker that between January 2002 and November 2002, there were an average of 3.5 collisions (They no longer call them accidents.) a month at the Georgia Ave/Rte 108 intersection and 3 collisions per month at the Spartan Rd/Rte. 108 intersection. Capt Walker did not know if that was good because she does not know how that compares to other intersections, but Sgt. Brown had indicated to her that he felt it was low. The traffic analyst is still studying the State road data. Dave Eskenazi noted that from the data GOCA has received, the bulk of the accidents are concentrated on Rte 108, but there are also a number of accidents at the Georgia Ave/Prince Philip Dr intersection. GOCA has been working with the State Highway Administration (SHA) and District Engineer Charlie Watkins. Emory Lane and Muncaster Mill Rd is also a concern. He hoped that the officers can be more sensitive to these areas as well.

- About 18 months ago, Charlie Watkins told GOCA that we would be getting a red light camera at the Georgia Ave/Rte 108 intersection within 6 months, but its not there. Paulette indicated that it is coming soon. There was a huge demand for the cameras and the manufacturer has not been able to fill their orders as quickly as they had hoped. Capt. Walker will let Art know when it should be in place.

- In concluding her presentation, Capt. Walker thanked our community for its commitment to the trailer and to making the upcoming improvements.

Revised Proposed Development Plans for the Relocation of Good Counsel High School to Olney – Art Raimo, President, Good Counsel High School noted that the High School filed an application for the relocation of their school to a portion of the Hyde property on Batchellors Forest Road about 7 months ago. An educational institution is a permitted use on this property, but it does have to go through the subdivision review process. They met with the Departmental Review Committee that the Park and Planning (P&P) staff coordinates with the other County and State agencies that are involved with permitting the project, such as Permitting Services, the County's Dept. of Environmental Protection. The Committee asked for a number of revisions including moving the entire project to the west side of the Batchellors Forest Rd, and moving the building and the parking further back from Rte. 108. As a result of the changes, they had to redo the agreements with the property owner and need some agreements with P&P relating to some procedural changes. All of these agreements are being renegotiated and amended. They are also working with the P&P Transportation staff on their traffic mitigation plan.

Their new plans address many of the concerns raised with the earlier plan. They have moved the school building further from Rte. 108 and to a lower elevation. Originally the building was sited on the highest point of land on the site. The parking has been moved further into the site so that the closest spaces are 300' from Rte. 108. They have placed a practice field next to Rte. 108 and are retaining most of the trees on the Rte. 108/Dr. Bird corner of the site in order to retain a more rural look as you approach Sandy Spring. Their varsity stadium is also further from Rte. 108 and the Olney Theatre so that it will interfere less with theater productions. The main entrance to the school site will be on relocated Batchellors Forest Rd. There will be an additional entrance on Rte. 108 east of the new Old Vic/Batchellors Forest intersection, but it will only be a right-turn in/right-turn out. There will be fencing and restricted turning movements so that there will be no vehicular or pedestrian access to the school from the portion of Batchellors Forest from the point where it turns for the relocation and Dr. Bird Dr. There will 480 parking spaces in their parking lots. But, with the use of interior roads, practice fields and any other available land, they will be able to accommodate 900 cars for special events.

They have submitted a revised traffic survey and new mitigation plan that P&P staff is reviewing. They will make necessary revisions based on the staff comments and will provide a copy to GOCA as soon as they have made any necessary revisions. They will be responsible for making physical improvements to the east side of the Georgia Ave/Old Baltimore Rd intersection. They will extend the left turn stacking lane about 100 ft. At the Rte. 108/Old Baltimore Rd. intersection, they will be extending the left-turn stacking lane on Rte. 108. They are also going to ask for traffic signal at the Old Vic/Batchellors Forest/Rte. 108 intersection that they will play for. It will likely operate similarly to the light at Sherwood High School that only operates at arrival and dismissal times at the school. Otherwise, it will be a blinking light. They are increasing their busing. They now have one bus route and will increase that to 6 routes scattered around the County. Each bus holds 35-40 students. They will also set up a shuttle bus that will make at least 2 trips back and forth to the school from the Norbeck Road Park and Ride Lot, probably at 7:15 and 7:45 am. This will eliminate the need for some of the parents to drive all the way to the school. Approximately 100 spaces will be used by staff (about 100) and some will be for visitors, and handicap parking. They will give parking permits for the remaining space to juniors and seniors, They do not want to require student drivers to carpool because of the current studies that show the increase in accidents the more teenagers ride in a car with teenage drivers. They will, on the other hand, work with the adult drivers to form carpools. They will work on additional measures if P&P determines their mitigation plan is insufficient. They will be monitored, at their own expense, after the school is operating to see that their mitigation plan is working and continues to work. And, if necessary, they will be required to come up with additional measures.

They expect to have their hearing before the Planning Board in late January or February. They do not anticipate needing to go before the Developmental Review Committee again. Steve Kaufman, the attorney for Good Counsel HS, added that the portion of

Batchellors Forest between the point where the relocation begins and Dr. Bird Dr will not be abandoned. The exact alignment of the relocated portion of Batchellors Forest may change, but should be completely within the Hyde property. They are anticipating that the relocated road will form a T-intersection with the existing road bed. There is a possibility that the alignment may go further south towards Farquhar Middle School, but that is all Mr. Kaufman could say now.

The following points were made during a question and answer period:

- The fields should be far enough from any nearby roads that it is not likely for stray balls to get to the roads.
- The varsity stadium will seat 2,500 people. They estimate that they can accommodate 900 cars on their site and they will talk with St. Andrew Kim Church and St. Peter's Church about using their lots for overflow parking, including when inclement weather precludes them parking cars on their practice fields. They would run shuttle buses from St. Peter's.
- The original point where the school was to be built was the highest point on the site and is even with the top floor of the St. Andrew Kim House. Their school building will be lower than the Kim House. The building may not even be visible from Rte. 108. The front part of the building where their classrooms will be is 3 stories. The rear part of the building where the gymnasiums, cafeteria, and auditorium will be is 1 ½-2 stories tall. It will be 600' from Rte. 108 to the nearest part of the building. The lower parts of the building will face Rte. 108.
- They are estimating that a lot of people will be interested in using the shuttle bus from the Norbeck Park and Ride Lot because this will be a reverse commute for many of the parents and this will save them some time. They can also remind parents that the school must comply with the mitigation plan. They know that the County will hold them to their mitigation plan and are prepared to go to "Plan B" if they need to.
- Impact on traffic is still a major concern. The AM trip generation for the school was 800-1,000 in their original traffic survey. Mr. Raimo did not have the numbers from the revised traffic survey P&P is now reviewing, but they will get the numbers to GOCA as soon as possible.
- It was noted that the Norbeck Rd/Georgia Ave intersection is failing and because of that the Park & Ride Lot may not be the best location for the drop-off point for their shuttle bus. Mr. Raimo indicated that they had selected this lot because it was already there, but they will look at other options. It was also noted that it may not be realistic to think that teenagers will want to ride to a parking lot and then switch to a bus.
- Their hours of operation are 8:00 am – 2:45 pm. They currently have 1050 students and expect their enrollment to increase within 2-3 years to 1,200. With the number of classrooms they are planning and the class size they want to maintain, they do not anticipate their enrollment going above 1,200. They want to maintain a class size of about 22 students, with a maximum of 25. Now their maximum class size is 29 which is much higher than what they would like, but are necessary because of the size of their current school building. It was noted that their ending time is close to Farquhar's departure time, which may mean a lot of bus traffic entering onto Rte. 108.
- Mr. Raimo was not sure why the plan is showing a break in the 25' tree buffer on Batchellors Forest, but he will look into that. Mr. Kaufman added that there will be a reforestation plan for the site in addition to the tree preservation efforts they are planning.
- The total acreage in this plan is 52 acres which is similar to the previous plan, but this is a better layout that provides a better vista and a better campus feel. Mr. Raimo prefers this plan to the earlier plan. What has taken so long to come back with this revised plan has been renegotiating the agreements. The second access to Rte. 108 is for buses and for cars that will be heading east on Rte. 108 or want to go down Dr. Bird Dr. All of their storm water management facilities are underground.
- Originally the Centex Company had been negotiating with the Northwest Investment Co. on land west of the relocated Batchellors Forest Rd., but there have been some problems with those negotiations. Currently Centex is still planning to develop the land they own on the east side of the old Batchellors Forest Rd, but Mr. Raimo did not know what they were planning to do.
- They now control the access their students use and the turning policies at their Wheaton site and will do the same at this site. Students that do not obey their policies will have their parking permits suspended.
- The only homes near the site are the three Hyde family homes. They are planning to light their main field and 3 other fields. They do not plan to light the practice field near Rte. 108. Because of the distances and the newer lighting technology, they do not believe their lighting will impact the Hydes. The Rices did express some concern about this, particularly from the tennis courts next to Batchellors Forest Rd. The problems we experienced with the Norbeck Golf Driving Range were noted. Mr. Raimo noted that they would work with their lighting engineers when they get to that level of detail in their designs and would reconsider their intent to put lights on the tennis courts, which pleased Mr. Rice since lights there would directly impact them, especially if the courts were made available to the community.
- A comment was made that the plan seemed to be much improved. It appeared that the school had been very responsive to P&P and to the community. It seemed like the school would be a real asset to the community.
- They expect to open the new school in September 2005. The build out should take 18 months.
- Batchellors Forest Road is being realigned because the staff said to do that. Mr. Raimo believes it was originally included in the 1980 Master Plan to provide a safer access for school buses to Rte. 108. He noted, also, that it would be harder to justify a traffic light at the relocated intersection with Rte. 108 if they do not realign the road.
- They have not had any conversations with WMATA or the County regarding bus service to the site. There is a Metrobus route on Rte. 108 now, but very few of their students at their current location use public transportation even though they are on a transit route. They will explore the option of having the bus that goes to Montgomery General Hospital routed through or near their site, as well as other options.
- Participation in after-school activities various throughout the school year. There is generally more activity during the Fall and Spring months. During the peak times, there are 300-400 students participating in school sports or other activities and they all

leave at different times. The bulk leave between 2:45 and 4:00 pm and the rest usually leave between 4:00-7:00 pm. It is especially staggered during the Fall.

- An independent contractor that Good Counsel pays for will monitor their traffic mitigation efforts and they do not have any objection to representatives from the community being involved in that process.

OFFICER/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President's Report – Art reported that:

- He had sent a letter to the owners of Moss Chiropractic based on the motion passed at the last meeting to point out to them that the recommendations for the revised Greater Olney Master Plan will be to restrict commercial development to the town center commercial core.

Treasurer's Report

Roy Peck reported that the current balance is \$4,309.07 with checks for \$40 to be deposited.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Joe Buffington encouraged everyone to Shop Olney during the Holiday Season.

OLD BUSINESS

Public Hearing for the Rte 28/97 Intersection Design – Dave Eskenazi reported that the State Highway Administration had held a public hearing the previous evening to present the 7 options being considered and to hear public comments. A focus group considering a variety of options has been meeting for a couple of years and the staff has come up with a variety of changes in response to the concerns raised at the various focus group meetings. The group ultimately seemed to agree on an alternative that had Rte. 28 relocated a bit north of its current location above the Park & Ride Lot and going under Georgia Ave that would remain at-grade and would meet up again with Rte. 28 near Muncaster Mill Rd. It would involve cloverleaf turns from Georgia Ave. onto Rte. 28. There would be traffic lights at the two points where the relocated Rte. 28 meets up with the original Rte. 28 alignment.

At the hearing, several groups that had participated in the focus groups, especially the Flower Valley Homeowners Association and St. Patrick's Church (at the corner of Rte. 28 and Muncaster Mill Rd), testified that they thought SHA should delay action on this project since it is clear from the election that the ICC will likely be built and they should wait until it is to assess the impact on traffic on Rte. 28. The owner of the Mobil gas station and Ben Kramer, the owner of the shopping center on the opposite side of Rte. 28 testified that any of the options would have a negative impact on their business and the businesses in the shopping center. Several people, including Art Brodsky testifying for GOCA noted, as the staff had earlier, that this improvement would be needed regardless of whether the ICC is built. So Art testified that SHA needed to move forward and that GOCA favored either Alternative 7 or 6 modified but preferred Alternative 7. The important thing was that GOCA did not want an above ground crossing over Georgia Ave. and wanted an alternative that minimizes the impact on the neighborhood, particularly The Preserve, Flower Valley, and Leisure World. Alternative 6 Modified meets these concerns, but Alternative 7 is better. He noted also that the backups on Muncaster Mill were not sufficiently addressed and that their outreach effort should have included the Olney area by putting information in the Olney Library and by doing mailings to the Olney community. Chuck Keyserling noted that most of the people speaking against the project were concerned about east-west traffic, but he felt that improving traffic flows on Georgia Ave. was a bigger issue. The record is still open, so he suggested that other civic associations may want to submit written testimony. The SHA engineer in charge of this project is Sue Rojan. Chuck Young thanked GOCA for going and taking the position we did. He noted that there is no Federal or State money currently for projects like the ICC, so this project needs to move forward.

Greater Olney Master Plan Review – Khalid Afzal reported that the P&P staff is working on the report for the Planning Board with no real changes from what was presented at the Open House. They are still tweaking the town center concept to improve it but keep the satellite town feel. With respect to the Olney Elementary relocation, they are looking at options for leveraging the site to raise some funds to help finance the relocation of the school, such as introducing some residentially zoned areas that the County could sell or trying to encourage some upscale retail to help fund the relocation. They are looking at what kind of zoning there should be in the town center area if they don't want the C-1 or C-2 commercial zoning currently there. They are currently proposing to add 800-1,000 residential units and are considering adding another 400, with 300 in the town center area to make it more vibrant and another 100 outside of the town center area. That would result in adding approximately 1,300 buildable units instead of the 950 currently in the draft. They anticipate submitting the Staff Draft to the Planning Board in January, not December. Thirty days after it is released for comment, there will be a public hearing.

He has not heard anything more from Harvey Maizel regarding the Silo Inn property or from Winchester Homes about the property in the northeast wedge between Georgia Ave. and Norbeck Rd. and below the ICC right-of-way. Some options are still being discussed for the Trotter's Glen property. Mrs. Pollinger, the own. has been looking for some development options. They are proposing 5-acre cluster zoning for the southeast quadrant, but the Rural Neighborhood Cluster zone has been suggested. They

have not heard anything more about the Gandel property near Olney Manor Park. No action has been taken on the Kirby proposal for retirement housing on Georgia Ave north of Rte. 108. The staff is still looking at the issue of Appomattox Way. This kind of use is consistent with the master plan, but the zoning is the question since the property is not currently zoned for that use. With respect to the Upper Rock Creek Draft Master Plan, the second worksession was postponed to December 19th because of the snow. They will be discussing several specific properties. There will probably be one or two more worksessions on into January. The draft should be submitted to the County Council in March.

Olney Days Festival 2003 – Helene Rosenheim reported that plans for adding Joe's Ride to the Festival weekend are moving forward. Bobby and Sandy Fletcher are working with some friends to help organize the event. The Ride would be a thank you from the Sanford family for all the community did for their family during their son, Joey's illness. The Fletchers have been in touch with a group called the Potomac Peddlers who have organized a number of these types of events. We have gotten contacts with the Department of Public Works and Transportation and the Department of Parks who may be able to help as well. The Fletchers and their friends will be responsible for organizing and staffing the event. They are currently looking at basing the event in the parking lot of the Oakdale Emory Church and are still proposing 3 levels to the event, a bike rodeo completely in the parking lot for the younger children, a moderate-length course for teenage and beginning riders, and a 25-30 mile course for more experienced riders. Each rider would pay a nominal entrance fee to participate that would be used to cover the cost of running the event, with any excess being used to finance other aspects of the Festival. Riders will also be encouraged to raise donations that would be given to charities selected by Sanford family and the Ride organizers. Helene also noted that Mike D'Andre, who had organized the Home Run Hitting Derby with the Cal Ripken/Babe Ruth baseball group is no longer associated with that group and had suggested that she contact Jim Bruno with the St. Peter's Athletic Association to see if he would take over the event. Mike indicated that he would still be available to help. The next meeting of the Olney Days Festival Planning Committee is January 16th.

GOCA's 25th Annual Awards - Ron Berger reported that plans are moving forward for the upcoming 25th GOCA awards celebration. The fundraising letter that Peter Monge and Hunter Hollar agreed to send has gone out. And, we are now soliciting nominations for this year's awards. The Awards Ceremony will be on Sunday, March 2, 2003 at the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department's Ballroom from 5-7 pm. Barry Schwartz's catering division will be preparing a variety of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. Ron encouraged people to submit nominations. The deadline for nominations is January 14th.

A Skateboard Park in Olney – Art Brodsky noted that there has not been any real progress with the efforts to locate a skateboard park in the Olney area. The difficulty at the moment is finding someone to operate one.

NEW BUSINESS

Snow Removal – Chuck Keyserling noted that several streets in his development were never plowed following the recent snowfall. From reports of others at the meeting, it seemed that snow removal had been very spotty this time. After a few days the snowfall, people were told that the snow was too packed down to plow. Some streets that were not plowed did get sand within the last day or so. At one point, the voice mail for the snow removal request number was full and would not take any more messages. The new District 2 County Councilmember Mike Knapp noted that he had spoken at length with Al Genetti, Director of the Dept. of Public Works and Transportation who had explained that part of the problem was that the snow came before they had completed the leaf collections around the County. That made the snow removal more difficult which slowed the plow trucks done and they were not able to get to all the streets they normally get to. Mike said that he is compiling a list of streets that were not plowed this time and asked people to email the names of affected streets to him at councilmember.knapp@co.mo.md.us. The County also need to make sure businesses are aware of their responsibility to clear the sidewalks in front of their businesses.

Proposed Surcharge For Registering Cars – Chuck Keyserling also noted that there will be a hearing before the Montgomery County Delegation on December 16th concerning, among other things, the State Legislatures proposal to add a \$50 surcharge for registering cars for tags. It was noted that this is part of the Go Montgomery Initiative. The State is preparing legislation that would provide authorizing language so that Montgomery County could do this. The language would let other Counties do the same. This was always part of the Go Montgomery proposals, but the County needs State approval to collect it. The Delegations website lists all the bills that will be discussed on December 16th.

Following this discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Helene Rosenheim
Recording Secretary

People in attendance: Khalid Afzal, Jackie and Danny Benn, Ron Berger, Paulette Bowles, Art Brodsky, Joe Buffington, Bill Bullough, Rick Coburn, Leslie Cronin, Helen Dodson, Dave Eskenazi, Jim Folk, John Ferguson, Joan Hall, Robert Hausman, Joe Hess, Terri Hogan (Gazette), Paul Jarosinski, Steve Kaufman, Mike Kelley, Chuck Keyserling, Mike Knapp, Polly Knight, Susan Lears, Charlie Maier, Karen Montgomery, Roy Peck, Art Raimo, Jim and Mary Rice, Helene Rosenheim, Don Schmelter, Ken Silverstein, Steve Smet, Clara Smith, Capt Patricia Walker, Wendy Walker, Ed Weisel, John Weske, Phil Wilk, and Chuck Young.