



Greater Olney Civic Association

Post Office Box 212 Olney, Maryland 20830

www.goca.org

MINUTES – FEBRUARY 11, 2003

The meeting was called to order by President Art Brodsky. Following introductions, the minutes from the January meeting were approved with no additions or corrections. The agenda was approved with no changes or additions.

There were no **PUBLIC COMMENTS**.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President's Report - Art Brodsky reported that:

- Council Member Mike Knapp had informed him that there is leaf vacuuming downcounty, but currently there is no leaf district in Olney. The County is expanding the existing district. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWAT) wants to let civic and homeowner associations know about this program. Art invited Steve Suprata from DPWT's Div of Highway Services. Mr. Suprata noted that the County's Recycling Office wants to recycle more leaves. The cost each year is based on the actual cost of operating the leaf program the previous year. This year the fee is \$49. The service includes 2 vacuuming pick-ups each year per household after the residents have swept the leaves to the curb. The current northern boundary is Norbeck Road and their office is interested in expanding to include the Olney area because of the increased population density in this area now. Mr. Suprata is the only staff person working on this program, so he is relying on the civic associations to get the petitions filled out and obtaining evidence that the signers are the property owner(s) because the fee will be added to their tax bill as a part of the recycling fee.

As long as DPWT has the names, addresses, and tax id numbers, the tax office can process this as late as July. But there needs to be a public hearing 120 after Mr. Duncan receives the petitions. They like the boundaries to be clear physical demarcations, e.g., major roads, stream beds, and parks. The legislation requires that areas need at least 100 units to be added, so some associations may need to work with adjacent associations. If an association gets enough votes in support of having the program extended into their development, everyone in the development will be charged the fee. Eligibility will be based on the order of receipt of the petitions, not when the processing is completed. If they get a large number of petitions they may not be able to accommodate all the requests this year, but will add them as quickly as they can. Mr. Suprata also noted that he is available to talk with any interested civic and homeowner associations.

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

- If a road is a boundary, they only collect from the side of the street within the boundary area.
- 80% of a neighborhood must agree to be included.
- If a community in the midst of other communities who accept the program does not want to participate, they will not be forced to.
- Even if a community gets 80% agreement, they community may still not get the service because the hearing examiner can recommend that a community not be added to the program based on the testimony at the hearing. The County Executive makes the final recommendation.
- It was suggested that urbanization is moving into more of the rural areas, so the County should look more comprehensively about providing this and other similar programs.
- There is a trash pickup program in parts of the County, but that also has a hearing process for inclusion in the program. They are working on streamlining this process. Mulching and composting is still the preferred method by the County for disposing of leaves. In the Fall, 75% of the Highway Services staff is devoted to leaf collection, so they would like to spend less on this. If a community is heavily treed or property owners can handle the disposition of the leaves on their property, that is the best solution.

Treasurer's Report – Roy Peck reported that the current income is \$5,260 for a balance of \$9,713.05 with \$4,500 earmarked for the Awards Ceremony.

Olney Chamber of Commerce Report - Joe Buffington reported that March 4th 7:30 am. Mike Reilly, Freeman Associates project manager for the Olney Village Mart redevelopment will be at the Chamber's Rise and Shine Breakfast. He will give a presentation on the status of their plans, and some of their new tenants. Joe also thanked Art Brodsky for all his hard work.

Membership – John Lyons reported that he is now taking over Membership and expects to send out dues letters for 2003 within the next couple of weeks.

Legislative – Steve Smet reported that legislation relating to Go Montgomery, Bill 30303, will be coming up for a vote. He has a legislative update for the General Assembly and noted that both the County and the State have good websites relating to the legislation they will be considering. Chuck Keyserling noted that the point was made at the Civic Federation meeting the night before that Maryland is effectively a donor state to the Federal Government and Montgomery County is a donor county to the State. Many of the tax dollars collected from Montgomery County are not returned to the County. This bill sends a message to the State that we expect more of those dollars to come back to our County. Cary Lamari feels there is enough money in the budget for road projects for the next 15 years, and that this legislation lets the County Executive transfer more money to other projects.

OLD BUSINESS

Kirby Zoning Application – Steve Smet reported that GOCA had to write a letter to the Park & Planning Commission (P&P) opposing the zoning application submitted by Jeff Kirby for their elderly housing project on Georgia Ave because the latest plan being considered was different than what had been presented to us. Jeff Kirby asked the Planning Board to defer their decision until he had an opportunity to speak to GOCA. So, Steve had invited him to this meeting.

Scott Wooffand, Jeff's engineer noted that the property in question is bounded by James Creek on the east, a residence on the north, commercial development on the south, and Georgia Ave on the west. They have named the project Olney Manor. He noted that they first came to GOCA in March and met with us several times after that. They had been working with P&P staff all that time as well, and since they presented P&P with the last plan we saw. Staff had allowed them to encroach on the stream bed at the southern end in exchange for strong environmental improvements at the north end with additional stream buffering reforestation. Staff felt the parking area was too big, so they reduced the parking to one side. Their lot will be 2-8 ft below the elevation of the roadway, south to north. They are moving the parking to the north end to make it less visible from the road. They had designed the building so it appears to be 3 separate buildings even though they are connected behind the courtyards so tenants can move between the buildings without going outside. They also lowered the roofline as much as possible. They submitted another plan to P&P to reflect the changes they made in response to P&P's requests about a week before the hearing and provided a copy to GOCA.

To address P&P's concerns they moved the lower building 22' closer to Georgia Ave and down 3 ft. They eliminated the lower access and moved the access to the middle of the property eliminated some of the parking and intensified the landscaping. Jeff noted that they had used our resolution to see what was important to GOCA, e.g. height of building and breaking up the façade. They felt they had been consistent with our interests. They still have to deal with the existing Master Plan. Staff also told them they had to address a plan to deal with the possibility that Appomattox will go in, but they will continue to ask that it not be built. To provide for the possibility that Appomattox will be built, they made the building a little shorter and moved some of the parking on the other side of Appomattox. They had indicated earlier that they would only build 80 units if Appomattox were built, however, with the changes they have made to the building design, they can now get 100-103 with Appomattox and 104 without it. If the Planning Board decides to eliminate the road in their subdivision plan, they will go ahead with the full plan, and if they decide to leave it in, they will dedicate the right-of-way for the road. He noted that the staff recommendation in the upcoming master plan is to retain the road. In 1996 the Planning Board did vote to eliminate the road, but the staff reopened the question in the master plan process.

In their earlier plan the building was 50' and in this plan, the center building is still 50' and the ends are 49'. They are still seeking a parking waiver. The code requires 181 spaces, and they are proposing 63 spaces. They believe the code has always over required for elderly housing. The reality is that they do not need as much as required. Typically, there is a .4-.5 ratio of cars per units. The 63 parking spaces they are proposing yields a .6 ratio. They have gotten a waiver for their project on Norbeck Rd and Randolph Rd, although they are not built yet. Marty Klauber, the People's Counsel, noted that he was concerned about the waiver. The issue is overflow visitor parking and its impact on adjacent properties. He strongly recommended that a traffic parking management plans. A plan Mr. Klauber was involved with recently developed a plan that discouraged employees and residents from parking off-site on residential streets. It was suggested that they speak with Olandwood about use of their parking lot for overflow parking. Jeff added that he hoped to some kind of committee to oversee the parking situation and would form a similar one for this property, but he noted that if there was an issue of concern that people should not wait for a meeting of such a committee and call him. The documentation that should be included for consideration at the P&P hearing should provide information on the operating plans relating to parking on and off the site on nearby streets and call for the formation of an oversight committee for parking management that includes a GOCA representative. If none is in the plan by the time it gets to the Planning Board hearing, Mr. Klauber will introduce it.

The facility will be an independent living facility, so there will be a limited number of employees including 4 full-time and 1 part-time employee. With respect to pedestrian access, there will be a sidewalk along Georgia Ave that will be extended in front of this facility. There will be paths through the rear of the property towards the shopping centers. The Hails, the property owners to the north of the site expressed a number of concerns about the site. They want to maintain the R-200 character of their property around their land. They are concerned about the encroachment of the parking lot towards their property. Mr. Hail did note that while they had some concerns, they did feel this was a good use of the land. Jeff indicated a willingness to work with the Hails.

Steve Smet will meet with Jeff and P&P later in the week to work through some of these issues, so he asked anyone interested to send him any additional concerns in writing prior to the meeting. Khalid Afzal noted that the issue for the staff had become saving the creek versus the height of the building, and gave up on the height issue to protect the streambed.

In discussions later in the meeting, Khalid noted that they had struggled with the height of the building. They cannot ask Kirby to put their building in the stream buffer and the height is adjustable. With the 3 stories and the 85 units they did not need to go into the stream buffer. The height of buildings in the core town center area has been an issue with the master plan study. He is looking forward to the community's input on the Kirby project so they can use it as guidance for their recommendations in the upcoming staff draft Olney Master Plan. If a 4-story building is approved here, it has implications for the rest of the town center because 4 stories would become the maximum height for other building in the town center, especially with Victory Housing being 3 stories and Good Counsel being approximately 50 ft. Steve Smet suggested that the maximum height of buildings should be in feet because floors in different kinds of buildings can be different heights. The consensus of the group was that the officers would get feedback from the local civic and homeowners associations and relay that to the applicant concerning the latest version of his proposal. It was noted that Jeff had said earlier that they could manage with 80 units and now says they need 100. However, the building does not have to be so close to the Hails property. And, just because you can build all the units permitted on a lot doesn't mean you have to.

Olney Police Substation – Art reported that some of the permit applications had been returned for additional work and have now been finalized. However, there are still some issues relating to using the Montgomery Foundation to receive donations that are still unresolved.

Good Counsel High School Relocation Proposal – Art Brodsky spoke with Janet Gregor on P&P's Transportation staff who indicated to him that Good Counsel had submitted its traffic management plan. The plan is for 1,200 students and proposing a busing program that will accommodate 275 students being picked up along 7 bus routes plus a shuttle bus from the Norbeck Park & Ride Lot at Norbeck and Georgia Ave. that will run 2 times in the morning and 2 times in the afternoon. This should accommodate 40 students. The traffic management plan will be posted on P&P's website shortly at www.mcparkandplanning.org/transportation/trafficstudy. She indicated that they had expected a more aggressive plan because this one leaves many teachers and students arriving by car. John Lyons also spoke to Ms. Gregor who indicated to him that the traffic management study was forwarded to the Dept. of Public Works and Transportation and the State Highway Administration (SHA) and they have 30 days to respond.

Khalid noted that as a part of the staff draft of the master plan they have include the 1980 master plan alignment of Batchellors Forest that curves around to Rte 108 through this site. In the current Good Counsel plan that road alignment is now hugging the western edge of their property and connects with Batchellors Forest at a 90 degree angle. The staff is looking at an alignment that moves into the Casey property adjacent to the Good Counsel property. If the Casey property is not build by the time Good Counsel would be built, the extension of Old Vic into this property would end at the school entrance and the students would go in and out at Rte. 108. This would eliminate the need to improve the end of Batchellors Forest and the entire road could be classified as a rural rustic road and would still end at Dr. Bird Dr. This alignment is not reflected in the traffic management plan because the staff introduced the idea after the report was complete. Khalid noted, too, that so far Good Counsel had not officially submitted a plan with the whole building on the Westside of Batchellors Forest.

The parking lot has 460 spaces. There will be approximately 125 staff members that leaves 345 spaces for students and visitors. There will be 1,200 students, of whom 250 are anticipated arriving by bus which leaves 950 students arriving by car. With the 345 spaces for students, there would be 615 students being dropped off and picked up. This would result in an estimated 1,000 trips in and out.

With respect to the current Good Counsel site in Wheaton, the surrounding civic associations have signed an agreement with the developer of that site, but the developer wanted a confidentiality agreement. The issues involve relate to noise mitigation, the location of the Wheaton Rescue Squad, and the use of the Good Counsel gymnasium.

Traffic Safety Issues in Olney – Mike Kelley reported that GOCA formed its Traffic Safety Task Force about a year ago following 4 fatal accidents within about 3 months. The members include Mike, Dave Eskenazi, Steve Smet, Don Schmelter, and Ed Weisel. They got 2000-2001 accident data from both the State and the County for 6 roads. After analyzing the data, they have come up with 4 recommendations:

- Keep a high profile on dangerous areas of State roads or intersections with State roads by means of articles in the Gazette newspaper, letters to SHA, etc.
- Target specific County roads and intersections with a "behind the scenes", politically sensitive approach to our County administration of Doug Duncan, Al Genetti, Lori Gillen and others.
- Endeavor to use a cost/benefit approach as part of the justification process for selected road improvements.
- Focus on one dangerous intersection or area at a time to concentrate the effectiveness of the improvements and the ability to measure and judge the effectiveness of changes put in place.

They recommended that our first target be the intersection of Bready Road and Bowie Mill Road where the following improvements should be made:

- Trim back trees in the right-of-way east and west of Bready on the south side of Bowie Mill to improve sight distances for vehicles approaching Bready on Bowie Mill and for vehicles turning left from Bready.
- Install “rumble strips” at an appropriate distance before the warning signs indicating an intersection and curve on the east and westbound sides respectively.
- Replace the existing warning signs with high visibility optic yellow signs or find an appliqué of high visibility optic yellow to be applied as a border on the existing sign.

The Task Force had not considered a 4-way stop at the intersection, but it is worth looking into. There may be an issue with it being so close to the 4-way stop at Bowie Mill and Visibility and speed are the real issues at this intersection.

Mike cited some of the accidents statistics, and noted that there had not been anymore accidents at Rte. 108 and Old Baltimore Rd since the article in the Gazette. Art noted the concern of adding 800 cars to this intersection which has some of the highest accident statistics in the area. Dave also noted that the accident data they received only represents accidents that were reported to the police and does not include accidents that were not reported. It was noted that visibility at Cashell Rd & Emory Rd is also obstructed by trees and shrubbery. It was suggested that action forms be submitted to the DPWT Action Group which is usually very effective at this kind of maintenance, and that the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board for their assistance.

Olney Days Festival 2002 – Helene Rosenheim reminded everyone that the dates for this year’s Festival are May 16th-18th. The Fletchers and their friends have decided to move ahead with Joe’s Ride, a bike ride to honor the memory of Joe Sanford. The admission fees for the Ride will help finance that event and other aspects of the Festival. The donations raised by the riders will go to the Sanford Foundation. There will be 3 levels to the Ride. A Bike Rodeo for the youngest children in the parking lot of the Oakdale Emory Church. Then there will be a 10-mile course for new and younger riders, and a 35-mile course for more expert riders. The event will be early Saturday morning. Other plans for the Festival are moving along well.

2002 GOCA Awards – Ron Berger noted that because this is the 25 year GOCA has presented its awards, we are planning a special event for this year. It will be on March 2nd from 5-7 pm. In addition to the officials we normally invite, we have invited all the past Citizen of the Year winners and as many of the other winners as possible, plus all the past GOCA presidents. We have received quite a few rsvps. The County Executive will be presenting a proclamation declaring the day GOCA Day. The ceremony will be at the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department Ballroom and will be catered by BJ Pumpnickel’s Catering Division. We have received \$4,500 to date in donations from several corporate sponsors and still have several pledges to cover the costs of this event. There will be a solicitation for additional funds in the Chamber’s Monday morning Flash Fax, so he is hoping for additional donatins. Ron encouraged all of the GOCA delegates to attend. He then reported the results of the tallying of ballots, noting that the results were close, as they often are. The winners for the 2002 awards were:

Citizen of the Year: Ellen Lent

Contribution to Community – Olney Boys and Girls Community Sports Association, aka, OBGC
Susan Petrocci
Jennifer Schauffler

GOCA Worker of the Year - Joan Kramer

There was one issue with Olney Heritage Awards. We had intended to put 2 names on the ballot and inadvertently left of the name of Tom Abraham. Tom was the first GOCA president and did a great deal to make GOCA what it is today. He has already been invited to the ceremony as a past president, so this would be an excellent time to recognize his contribution. There was no objection to adding his name at this point.

So the recipients of this year’s Olney Heritage Award will be both Tom Abraham and Helene Jennings

NEW BUSINESS

East Norbeck Park – Steve Mann noted that E. Norbeck Park is on the left side of Norbeck Rd. Until 2-3 years ago, the park was 10 acres. Several years ago, 15 acres were purchased through a capital improvements project for additional parking. There had been several deaths 2-3 years ago as people crossed Norbeck Rd. There was to be soccer fields added to the fields below The Preserve, but the Rte 28 realignments will eliminate those fields. So they now want to add a single-use field for softball, baseball or soccer using the new 15-acres. There was no opposition to the plans by the Norbeck Civic Association. However, one person opposed the plan and wants thee additional 15 acres retained treed. But, most of the games are played during the evening rush hour so it is important that the additional parking be provided on the same side of Norbeck as the fields. P&P did eliminate one field to in a treed area with a path at the rear of the site. There will also be a 150 ft. buffer for the stream so there will not be any incroachment on the stream. The County does not usually put lights in new parks, but will if the community wants them. Steve and the other abutting property owners do not object to there being lights. John Lyons noted that his property backs up to th park and he would not like to see more lighting at the park. There was another plan presented but they did not think it made as good a use of the space because it put a field too close to the road. Steve noted that it would be helpful to have GOCA support, even without the lights because in the current budget environment, any opposition could kill the project. According to Linda Komes at

P&P, there will be a community meeting on March 18th and a Planning Board meeting on April 24th. This item will be put on the March agenda for GOCA to take a position on it.

Election of the 2003 Slate of GOCA Officers – Ron Berger reported that there were no additional nominations for officers. The following slate of 2003 of officers was voted in by acclamation:

President – Steve Smet, Norbeck Meadows
 Executive Vice President – John Lyons, SEROCA
 First Vice President – Rich Kopanda, North Creek
 Second Vice President – Chuck Young, Individual Member
 Corresponding Secretary – Don Schmelter, Highlands of Olney
 Recording Secretary – Helene Rosenheim, Mid-County Regional Service Center, Olney Community Liaison (Does not vote)
 Treasurer – Roy Peck, Norbeck Meadows

Following a thank you from Art to all the 2002 officers and a final reminder about the Awards Ceremony on March 2nd, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Helene Rosenheim

Helene Rosenheim'
 Recording Secretary

People in attendance: Khalid Afzal, Jackie and Danny Benn, Ron Berger, Art Brodsky, Joe Buffington, Stanley Elswick, Dave Eskenazi, Barbara and Robert Hails, Robert Hausman, Terri Hogan (Gazette), Mike Kelley, Jeff Kirby, Polly Knight, Rich Kopanda, Cary Lamari, John Lyons, Steve Mann, Roy Peck, Helene Rosenheim, Don Schmelter, Pat Schroeder, Ken Silverstein, Stephen Smet, Mark Torrence, Mike Weiner, and Scott Woolfard.