



Greater Olney Civic Association

Post Office Box 212 Olney, Maryland 20830

www.goca.org

MINUTES – June 8, 2004

The meeting was called to order by Executive Vice President John Lyons. Following introductions, the May minutes were approved with no corrections or additions. The agenda was approved with no additions or changes.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer's Report - Roy Peck reported that the current balance is \$7,616.67.

Olney Chamber of Commerce Report – Joe Buffington reported that Pam Spears, Director, Montgomery General Hospital Foundation, was named the Chamber's Business Person of the Year. He also thanked all of those people who had made donations to the Olney Police Satellite Facility following the presentation made at the last GOCA meeting.

Membership Committee Report – John Lyons reported that there were no new memberships received during the previous month and that our current membership is at 18 associations. He asked any representatives from associations that have not paid their dues to encourage their leadership to send in their dues.

Land Use Committee Report – John Lyons reminded everyone about the Inter-County Connector public forum at Blake High School on 6/19 from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. The State Highway Administration will present more detailed information and there will be information presented by various groups opposing the road.

The Washington Christian Academy has asked for a second meeting with the members of the Southeast Olney Rural and expects to proceed to their public hearing with Park and Planning (P&P). John invited interested people to attend their meeting.

Roy Peck noted that the sign in front of Norm's Farm Market is not permitted and they are working to get the sign in compliance.

Astrid Pages noted that the James Creek HOA had received a new plan for the Tung property across the street from Brooke Grove Elementary. The new plan is for 13 single-family on larger lots than proposed earlier. The plan calls for the removal of buffer trees between these homes and all of the houses will require grinder pumps. James Creek is meeting the following week and P&P's DRC staff meeting will also take place during the following week.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Update on Staffing Deployments for Mont. Co. Police District 4 – Capt Patty Walker, the District 4 Commander, reported that a new staffing deployment system will become effective August 1st. District 4 which goes from Dennis Ave to the Howard Co. line is now divided into 2 sectors, John and King, with 4 beats each. In August, it will be divided into 3 sectors, John, King, and Lincoln, with 2 beats each. There are currently 5 sergeants working days and evenings and 2 midnight shift sergeants. They will be adding 7 sergeants. Now each sergeant has one corporal, and 15-17 patrol officers assigned to them. But it is difficult to supervise 17 officers. Under the new deployment, there will be one sergeant per sector with a team of 6-8 officers. There will be triple the number of sergeants and an increase in the number of officers. 56 % of the patrol officers have more than 2 years of experience. They are also changing the pattern of overlapping days. Now officers work 4 days, are off 3 days, work 4 nights, and are off 3 days. Each sector has different overlapping days, so more officers are on the streets each day. There will be one lieutenant for each sector. Capt. Walker also wants a more visible presence at the satellite facility. The John sector will be able to hold most of its roll calls in the trailer. And, each officer will go to permanent hours either all days or all nights. Workloads and response times in each sector should be the same. Olney is in the John-2 or J-2 sector, with Georgia Ave running up the middle of the sector. Each sector is divided into police reporting areas (RPAs). In forming the boundaries for the RPAs they try to draw them around communities or along natural boundaries or roadways. The advantage to this structure is that officers will become more familiar with the areas they work in and the community will get more familiar with the officers patrolling their areas. Lt. Hardy will be the lieutenant for the John sector, and Capt Walker encouraged people to contact Lt. Hardy with their concerns, even before the deployment goes into effect.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- It was suggested that GOCA let's its member association know of the need for donations to cover the satellite facility's rent.
- It was suggested that the County may be "underpoliced" if you consider the ratio of the population to the size of our work force. However, Capt. Walker explained that on the national average, Montgomery County is slightly lower in terms of size of the force, but with respect to response time and training, the County surpasses the other surrounding jurisdictions. Chief Manger has been asked to come up with a formula for the number of officers that will be needed as the population increases. There was general agreement that response time and rate of success in closing cases are key measures in assessing a police force.
- Previously, 1 officer went through the FBI training program every 2 years. The new Police Chief is increasing the number attending this training to 4 each year.

Update on Draft Olney Master Plan Approved for Transmittal to the County Council – Khalid Afzal reported that on May 27th, the Park & Planning Commission's Planning Board approved the draft Olney Master Plan. The draft now called the Planning Board Draft was forwarded to the County Council on May 28th. The County Council has 60 days to schedule a public hearing. So there will be a public hearing in September. Then the Council will take 3-6 months to review the plan. The Plan forwarded to the Council did not change a lot in terms of overall growth. The only real change was in the area of the Golden Bear property which was recommended to change from RE-2 to R-200/TDR-2, but was raised to TDR-7. In the southeast quadrant, the RNC cluster was not changed, except that the Plan incorporated the proposal for development of the Washington Christian Academy (WCA) on the Gandel property at the end of Batchelors Forest Rd near Georgia Ave. The Plan does not recommend sewer in this area, except that if the WCA is development they can apply for sewer as a public institution. The Gandel site was changed to the rural cluster zone at 1 unit per 5 acres instead of the RNC zone. In the town center area, there was no change in terms of the zoning and there will be more discussion with the community as they develop the definition of the new zone proposed for this area. The maximum building height is now 5 stories, based on building types with a mix of retail and residential development. This will give developers some flexibility. The discussion about the use of Olney Elementary School if it is disposed of by MCPS has been deleted, but the discussion of the need for a civic center in the town center has been strengthened with no specific discussion of a potential site(s). There is an elementary school site in Norbeck Grove, and a middle school site on Cashell. MCPS indicated that there are not sufficient increases in population anticipated to warrant building another high school in this area.

There was a change on the Bowie Mill site. The community had asked that a limit be put on the affordable housing proposed for this site. But the Planning Board did not want to do that because they did not know for sure how the site would be developed. For example if the site is developed for elderly housing, the site could be 100% MPDUs. He noted that if a project goes to elderly housing, it is taken out of the zone on the property. While it is not consider a special exception, it is reviewed in terms of compatibility, on a case by case basis. Generally use State funding to make them affordable. The site will likely be given to the Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs for disposal. The designation for Heritage Hill Rd has been lowered to Primary. In the southeast quadrant they did not focus on the equity issue related to the zoning designations, but looked at the most efficient use of space. The Kopperschmid property is recommended for 59 units. The density on the Golden Bear property was increased from TDR-2 to TDR-7, with . The Planning Board accepted the staff recommendation to rezone the whole Silo Inn property to the R-200 zone. But the 1980 Master Plan will continue in force until the zoning text amendment is complete which will be 3 -6 months after the Council approved the new plan. It is not clear what happens if the property owner of the Silo Inn site applies for building permits for a use the is permitted within the C-1 zone. It seems that he could move forward.

The following points were made during questions and answers:

- The plan still calls for 500 residential units in the town center area during the life of this master plan. However, if every property were developed to the maximum permitted, the town center area could yield 1,500 units. But not every property can use the mixed use feature that would make it work.
- The increase on the Golden Bear property from TDR-2 to TDR-7 is possible if all 80 acres in the area are developed using the TDR zone. The staff agreed with the Planning Board's recommendation to set the higher density because of the proximity of the Norbeck Park and Ride Lot and the proposed Georgia Avenue Busway which gave the property good access to public transportation and the proximity of shopping.
- Printed copies will be available within about a week and people can call 301 495-4555 to get copies mailed to them.
- The P&P staff was commended for their openness and willingness to listen to the community.
- In response to a question about the definition of the core area of the town center, it was explained that the definition of the zone is still being developed and there will be opportunities for public comment as it is being refined, but generally it is the area set back 100 ft from the boundaries of the town center area.
- The Planning Board wanted stronger language relating to a government center and included an option of the County obtaining land. It discusses providing building incentives for providing space for such a center, but the proposal to limit building height to 5 stories rather than the 4 story limit in the draft is not considered a building incentive. It could mean asking for open space, pedestrian amenities, meeting space, etc. if they go beyond a certain level of development. Incentive zoning is an established planning technique. Moving to a fifth floor does not mean getting additional FAR. It means a smaller footprint for the building which provides the space for some public amenities.

Khalid asked for comments on the pluses and negatives of the process used in developing this draft master plan. While it was noted that it would be better to take some time to think about that, a few of the initial comments were that the issue of the Bowie Mill site coming up so late in the process was a problem, it might have been better if the advisory committee had acted more as a group with a leader and voting on positions to be taken by the committee, and it might have been better to begin by asking how to protect what we have now before going to what to do to bring in more development.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Delegate Karen Montgomery noted that people in the area of the northern alignment of Inter-County Connector (ICC) are being affected by the slowness of the decision making process on the road alignment. It is difficult to sell their properties because of the uncertainties of the alignment and other unknowns related to the road. She also thought that the upcoming public meetings on the ICC will just be a rehash of information already known. With respect to the Environmental Impact Statement, they have not really discussed the impacts of light and noise. She has been working with MD Secretary of Transportation Flannery and he suggested that people make their voices heard – good or bad. So, she encouraged people to attend the public hearing, put their feelings in writing and give to the staff or send in later. If there are deviations from the master plan alignment, there could be impacts on Olney. She also noted that the State is now planning for this to be a toll road. She was told that there were no plans for bike paths. She was also told that Montgomery County is making environmental demands that are in excess of the Federal standards, so it is making the master plan route too expensive and why they are proposing all the alternative alignments. There are new Federal environmental standards so it is more likely that the Environmental Impact Statement will go through. The State's proposal to use Garvee bonds to finance the road could impact the development of other roads in the future because Federal money received for road construction for the next 15 years will have to be used to pay off the Garvee loans rather than being used for other road projects.

- Arnie Gordon noted that Norbeck Meadows CA is holding a meeting on June 11th at Cashell Elementary School at 7:00 pm to discuss concerns about increased crime in their community. Officer PJ Gregory, Mont. Co. District 4 Community Outreach Officer will be there and he invited all interested to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

Proposed Wincester School on Georgia Ave adjacent to Rock Hill Lane – Mr. Black, a property owner next to the site for the proposed Wincester School expressed grave concerns about the impact the proposed school would have on traffic. He also stressed that this site is not on Rock Hill Lane and will not be able to use Rock Hill for access to their property. John Lyons noted that GOCA has opposed this project, not only because of the traffic issues but because of concerns about the site being much too small for the intended use. There are also concerns about the light and noise the school would generate. He noted, too, that GOCA is being active in its opposition. Mr. Black added that no one has seen a traffic study or any environmental impact study, and the abutting property owners are concerned about their property values going down if this use were to be approved. Khalid noted that the hearing before the Planning Board would be late in July. P&P staff has told the applicant that the site is too small for what she is proposing. The applicant did submit a traffic study, but it was not complete and was returned to them. The environmental issues are still unanswered. And, they still need to meet with the State Highway Administration on ingress and egress. The staff will not likely recommend approval of the proposal. The Board of Appeals hearing is on September 8th.

Olney Days 2004 – Helene Rosenheim reported that the Olney Days had been a success. The weather cooperated for most of the weekend and the only event that was actually rained on was the Fish 4 the Cure. But, apparently fishermen don't mind fishing in the rain and they still had 40 people participate. They raised \$1,600 for the Children's Inn at NIH. The Mr & Ms. Olney Contest and Olney Community Band Concert were a great beginning to the weekend. The Mom's Club of Olney did a great job planning the event which was a lot of fun and interspersing the events between the pieces played by the Community Band made the evening flow better. Attendance was up and the organizers had an easier time getting contestants this year. Both the Olney Community band, and Moms Club are anxious to participate again next year. Joe's Ride had about 400 riders this year and the refinements that had been made to the 45K and 10K routes seemed to work better. Things went well at the Fun Fair at Olney Manor Park. The weather was better so attendance earlier in the afternoon was better. The Cold Stone Creamery Ice Cream Eating Contest was a big hit and we are planning to extend the idea next year. Dave Johannes, the owner of Good Earth Garden Market, offered to provide watermelons next year for a watermelon eating contest. We need more activities during the 4-8 pm hours, and this sounds like a fun addition. The Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department did a great job and even had to go out and buy more hot dogs. They added a dj and a moonbounce to their carnival games, food and fire engine rides this year because they were not able to do the Quint 40 Egg Drop Contest they had originally planned to do. Both were a big hit. We did have to shoot the fireworks off 15 minutes early, but we did get them off before the rains came and the park was emptied out. except for 4 teenagers playing volleyball in the rain by 9:30 – in record time. The Olney Days Parade went well. The police did decide that we did not have enough cones to move the northbound traffic on to the southbound side of Georgia Ave, so the northbound traffic was directed onto Old Baltimore Rd up to Rte. 108 and then into the center of town. This seemed to work reasonably well and is for a short enough amount of time, that we are considering using that as the detour for traffic in the future. Sgt. Pignataro, the District 4 Traffic officer is going to talk with the officers that had been positioned at Rte. 108 and Old Baltimore to get their impression of how that worked and will get back to us with his recommendations. Our concluding event ended up just being a band concert. We learned after information had been printed in the paper and in other publicity that the Grand Marquis was not going to be able to supply the food after all. But, the bands still wanted to play, and had respectable sized audiences. Each band has its

own group of followers, but many stayed for the whole event. And, Mamma Luccia responded to a last minute plea for help and donated 10 pizzas that we gave away along with bottles of water that we purchased. We did ask for donations and got enough to cover the costs of the water with \$11 to spare. Helene noted that Joe Buffington had spoken to her at the contest and indicated that we were welcome to hold the concluding event at the Buffington Building again and that he and his mother, Bette Buffington, wanted to play a greater role in planning the concluding event. Helene concluded by indicating that there would be a wrap-up meeting on June 23rd.

Following several announcements, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Helene Rosenheim

Helene Rosenheim
Recording Secretary

People in attendance: Khalid Afzal, Jackie and Danny Benn, Ron Berger, J. E. Black, Art Brodsky, Joe Buffington, Joe Corbett, Rick Coburn, Brenda Egeland, Barbara Falcigno, Jay Feinberg, Arnold Gordon, Robert Hausman, Terri Hogan (Gazette), Claire Isli (Marilyn Praisner's office), Chuck Keyserling, Donald Light, John Lyons, Karen Montgomery, Astrid Pages, Roy Peck, Susan Petrocci, Helene Rosenheim, Don Schmelter, Herman Taylor, Capt. Patty Walker, and Chuck Young.