

DRAFT MINUTES – April 11, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President Sharon Dooley. The minutes from the March meeting were approved with 5 corrections or no additions. The agenda was accepted with no additions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Alice and George Fichter, residents of Nash Country Estates noted that a dirt bike track has been built on a private property in the Nash Country Estates that is unsightly, dusty, noisy with a wavering sound of multiple bikes. They are concerned about the impact on property values and the environment and the potential proliferation of these types of uses with the increased interest in riding dirt bikes. The track has been in place for 2 years and is primarily used by the owner's son and his friends, usually 2-3 at a time and a dozen or so on the weekends. Currently there is no County legislation to prevent this and it is not prohibited on private property. Noise control levels are usually exceeded and there are no environmental regulations related to this use. The track is professionally maintained and the owner brings in about 5 tons of dirt a couple times a year. These residents have considered civil action for a nuisance, but have ruled that idea out. Their sense of the Council is that they are not currently interested in introducing any legislation. It was also noted that the County is building a dirt bike park north of Unity. It was suggested that they see what has been done in other jurisdictions with dirt bike tracks.

The Dept. of Permitting Services has not detected any impact on the stream nearby and are considering issuing a permit for a small land disturbance to improve the track. Once permitted, the run-off will be checked regularly. They are seeking to have County legislation passed that would prohibit dirt bike tracks within certain distances of residences similar to legislation in Baltimore County and to modify County ordinances to make it a special exception use rather than a permitted use. They asked GOCA for some guidance on how to move forward towards getting such legislation passed and for support in this effort.

- Paul Jarosinski noted that he had a letter dated March 19th regarding the ICC issue that other civic associations did not receive. It included some misinformation. There was also some new information that only Norbeck Meadows received.
- Arnie Gordon noted that Civic Federation will be holding an Awards Banquet on May 9th, 6-9:30 pm and this year's winner of their Gazette Award is Barbara Falcigno. He encouraged a good turnout from Olney in honor of Barbara.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Montgomery County Recycling-Sharon Dooley introduced Alan Pultyniewicz, the Recycling Coordinator for the Dept. of Public Works and Transportation. The following are some of the points made during his presentation and the question and answer period that followed:

- The County began recycling with newspapers in 1979. The amount of recycling in the County has been increasing steadily with the largest amount recycled in one year last year. There are lots of economic and environmental benefits to recycling.
- The County's goal for recycling is 50% of the County's waste, and single-family homes recycle 56%, businesses 37.7%, multi-family units – 13.5 %. Businesses and multi-family units contract with private companies so it is harder to reach their goal.
- Hazardous materials such as motor oil, anti-freeze, and pesticides should not be disposed of with trash.
- Pick-ups of large scrap metal such as appliances can be arranged by calling by 11:00 am the day before needing the pick up.
- The County is encouraging composting grass and yard clippings.
- The County only recycles plastic in the shape of bottles with a neck smaller than the base of the container, without the lids. Plastics melt at different temperatures and the County currently only has a contract with a recycler for the plastics bottles are made from.
- They now recycle electronic items such as small radios, cd players, etc. and they just began recycling TV sets.
- There are upcoming household hazardous waste collections set for 5/10 at Westland Middle School and 6/14 at Silver Spring Intermediate School from 10 am – 2 pm.

- Replacement tubs can be obtained by calling the recycling office and a new one will be delivered and the old one picked up, or it can be swapped for a new one at the Solid Waste Transfer Station.
- It is important to purchase recycled materials so that companies see a growing market for the used recyclable products.
- Contact information: main number - 240 777-6410; website – montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling; email – recycle@montgomerycountymd.gov. People can call him for help in writing newsletter articles.

Bob Beard noted that at the Community Conversation that evening they discussed a spring clean-up such as along the gas pipeline. So, a community clean-up is being considered for May 3rd. He encourages people who know of areas that need a clean-up or are interested in helping to contact him.

ICC Update – Sharon D. introduced Odessa Philips, Community Liaison for the Inter-County Connector (ICC) Team. This was a follow-up to the discussion of the ICC at the March GOCA meeting. Ms. Philips noted that:

- Five contracts have been issued for construction of the ICC and Phase A is underway and will open in 12-18 months before the rest of the road.
- There has been a “slew of activity” to address traffic impacts of opening Phase A ahead of the rest of the road.
- Alternative proposals were presented to elected officials who showed them to some, but not all communities along the ICC route. The State Highway Administration (SHA) staff is looking at these alternatives and the one proposed by Roy Peck. Initially they thought they could use his proposal, but have relooked at it and think that with some tweaking they might be able to use it.
- SHA is developing detail design, costs, and impact analysis for their modification to Roy's proposal to bring it to the level of analysis of the other alternatives so they can be compared. The SHA proposal is for a spur road from Georgia Ave to Rte. 28 just north of Rte. 28. They feel it will be good for the long-term solution providing some relief for the Rte. 97/28 intersection until that intersection can be improved. New westbound traffic would still go through the Rte. 97/28 intersection and eastbound traffic would go through the new road.
- SHA does not want to put in an entrance along the ICC that would be taken away when the remainder of the road is opened. Also, entrances requires more processing and are covered by more Federal requirements than an exit.
- With Roy's plan they still need to make improvements at the Rte. 97/28 intersection.
- They are communicating with the neighbors around Rte. 28.
- With respect to the letter Paul Jarosinski had mentioned earlier, they thought they were addressing a larger audience through the letter they sent to GOCA. So they only sent this second letter to organizations they had not heard from, especially around Rte. 28 to offer to come and speak to their groups.

Paul noted that one problem was that SHA made changes to the plan Roy submitted, so it is misleading to present it as Roy's proposal. Paul had asked to be notified of meetings relating to this issue, but it did not seem that he had been. Ms. Philips noted that the first meeting will be May 1st and that the earlier meeting with Leisure World was on a different topic. Also, SHA normally presents information to elected officials before going to associations and, at the time, she was not aware that Roy's proposal had been changed. There is a concern that they may be putting one community against another. They have a goal that in 2010 the Rte. 97.28 intersection would not be worse than the no-build option in 2010. It is not that now.

Paul Jarosinski moved that:

GOCA STATE THAT THE INTERCOUNTY-CONNECTOR CONNECTION TO RTE. 28 SHOULD BE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

The motion was seconded by Ed Weisel and passed overwhelmingly with 2 abstentions.

Paul noted that the funding for the spur will be available in July, so action on this is of the essence.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer's Report – Roy Peck reported that the current balance is \$5,448.62 with \$2,200 outstanding for Zambelli Fireworks Co.

Correspondence Report – Bob Beard reported that the correspondence included an announcement that the Montgomery County Council is soliciting applicants for 2 seats on the Montgomery County Planning Board for 1 Republican, 1 Democrat and/or 1 Independent.

Olney Chamber of Commerce Report – Joe Buffington noted that April 15th is the deadline for applications for the Chamber's annual scholarships.

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) – Bob Beard reported that there would be a major presentation in the Buffington's Community Room on April 30th and representatives of the OTCAC will serve on a panel at the Olney Town Meeting during Olney Days. The Committee has been able to create a seat for a small property owner in the town center as a result of a seat being vacated by Sunita Bhatia. She had been representing the Olney Coalition which has become inactive. The Committee has put one-panel displays of the draft illustrative concept in the Buffington's Community Room, the Sandy Spring Bank, Fletcher's Amoco and may put a few more around the town center. They are also willing to come to local civic and homeowners associations to do presentations on the concept.

Civic Federation Report – Arnie Gordon reported that Civic Federation will be discussing the County's budget with county agency representatives who are responsible for putting together the budget, including the County Executive, hopefully, on April 14th in the County Office Building.

Membership Committee – Matt Zaborsky reported that 16 of the 34 member associations from last year have submitted their dues for 2008, along with \$1,175 for Olney Days. One other payment is expected at the end of the month. He plans to contact those associations we have not heard from yet.

Land Use Report – Barbara Falcigno noted that she had attended the Affordable Housing Conference and found it useful. Some of the priorities for the County include creating a short-term property acquisition fund for apartments; providing public education on who affordable housing is for; and implementing a temporary tax waiver for County employees buying a new home.

She testified in opposition to the Wheaton Baptist Church sewer-water category change request. Councilmember Elrich moved to not approve the request, but the motion failed by a vote of 4-4 and so the request was approved.

Sharon Dooley noted that GOCA had received a development plan called Batchellor's Forest for 24 lots.

President's Report – Sharon Dooley noted that there was going to be a meeting at the Olney Library the next night regarding methane mining at Oaks Landfill. The landfill had been proposed to be used as park, but they have been told that the methane level is too high to make it a park. She noted she would not be able to attend and asked for someone to attend for GOCA and report at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

Olney Days 2008 – Helene Rosenheim reviewed the schedule for the weekend:

Friday – Mr & Ms Olney Contest, along with the band Crash 7:00-9:00 pm

Saturday – Joe's Ride and Stride 7:30-10:30 am

Olney Town Meeting at Oakdale Emory Church – 1:00 -3:30 pm

Fun Fair and Fireworks at Olney Manor Park 4:00 pm - Dark

Sunday – Olney Days Car and Truck Show at Fletcher's BP Service Center 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Olney Days Parade 2:00 pm

She referred people to the GOCA website, www.goca.org for more details.

Olney Town Meeting – Steve Cohen noted that GOCA has formed a committee to plan an opportunity during Olney Days to talk about issues impacting the future of Olney. The town meeting they are planning will cover 4 general topics including: traffic & transportation, the draft illustrative concept for the town center, public safety, and youth & education. They expect that the program will include a 1 hour panel discussion with experts in each of these areas; 25 minute simultaneous breakout sessions on each of the 4 topics, and a 30 minute wrap-up session where summaries of the breakouts will be presented to the full group.

Following a few additional announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Donedeo

Kathleen Donedeo, Recording Secretary

People in attendance:

Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Benny Bienvenue (Our House Youth Home), Brad Branch (Olney Mill), Joe Buffington (Chamber of Commerce), Keith Carlson (Hallowell), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Kathleen Donedeo (Hallowell), Dave Eskenazi (Norbeck Meadows), Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks), Alice & George Fichter (Nash Country Estates), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Alex Hamilton (Scout), Terri Hogan (Gazette), Robyn Holstein-Glass (PROJECT CHANGE), Tara & Barbara Huber, Brian & Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Vaughn Jiminez, Charles Kuebler (James Creek), Walter Lee (Environ, OTCAC), David & Donald Light (Scout), Diane Littlefield (Olney Acres), Jeannette Mendonca (Senator Rona Kramer's Office), Danny Miller (Nash Country Estates), Jon Morrison (Oak Grove), Astrid Pages (James Creek), John Paulishak (Nash Country Estates), Roy Peck (Norbeck Meadows), Odessa Phillip (ICC Team), Alan Pultyniewicz (MC Div of Solid Wastes), Theresa Kyne Robinson (Olney Oaks), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands/MCRSC/OTCAC), Lisa Stancik (Homeland Village), Anne Stretch (Cherrywood), Dennis Twombly (Olney Mill), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Louis Wilen (Cherrywood), and Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows).