

## **DRAFT MINUTES – May 13, 2008**

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Roy Peck announced that the Gaithersburg Community Chorus will be performing a concert for their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Quince Orchard HS on May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Roy also noted that he had been in contact with Odessa Philips, the spokesperson for the ICC regarding the flower bulbs on Georgia Avenue where the ICC will cross. The flowers there were part of the Lady Bird Johnson Beautification Program. She has indicated that we will be able to dig up those bulbs and added that the contractor will not be working on that area until the end of the year and the bulbs should be dug up in the winter. She will let us know when that work will begin in time so that there is time to remove the bulbs.
- Danny Benn reminded everyone that the Relay for Life will take place at Sherwood HS on Saturday, May 31 – Sunday morning, June 1<sup>st</sup>. There are 106 teams this year, 20+ more than last year. They still need bottles of water that can be dropped off at the event.
- Sharon Dooley reminded everyone as well, that the Olney Farmers and Artists Market is under way again and encouraged people to attend.
- Ed Weisel noted that the Ride-On system is getting overwhelmed and because of budget cuts they can't buy new buses. This seems like a bad time to be cutting service and he suggested getting more statistics on ridership before going to County legislators to ask that service not be cut.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**Update on Development Plans for Montgomery General Hospital** - Sharon Dooley welcomed Peter Monge and the members of his staff, Lynn Myers and Cameron Pratt, who were there to provide an update on Montgomery General Hospital's (MGH) development plans which is now part of MedStar. The following are some of the points made during their presentation:

- MedStar now has 8 hospitals and more than 20 diversified campuses. Georgetown U joined MedStar in 2005.
- They will be going from the 149 to 165 beds.
- The Emergency Dept. is being expanded to the west with a 3-story addition, and there will be a second floor added to the administrative building. This part of the expansion allows the relocation of administrative offices into the administrative building and the redesign of the vacated space for single-bed patient rooms
- They are getting prices for adding decks to the garage. They are planning to add decks over the ground level parking next to the existing garage.
- The expanded Emergency Dept. is expected to open in 2009. The remainder should be done in 2010.
- Several of the current tenants of their existing office buildings are asking for more space. Plus they are recruiting new doctors, but don't have space for more offices. They have even placed doctors in the Olandwood campus, but that is full. About 27% of their physicians are primary care physicians, but they do not have as much depth with specialists. So the focus of much of their recruitment effort is to attract additional specialists.
- Being a part of MedStar is good for the community because they can learn from the other member hospitals, there has been increased interest in MGH, and they will have opportunities for partnerships with the other MedStar hospitals with specialists from other hospitals visiting patients at MGH.
- All of this is creating the need for additional professional office buildings.
- They have contracted with Folger Pratt to design and build 2 new office buildings on the land on the west side of Prince Philip Drive.
- The area there is 14 acres and the buildings will be oriented as close to the hospital as possible and further from the abutting housing. Each building will be 4 stories. The 3<sup>rd</sup> building will be 60,000 sq. ft and the 4<sup>th</sup> will be 50,000 sq. ft.
- The entrance to this new area will be aligned with the existing main entrance on the eastside of Prince Philip Dr.

- They will build in 2 phases, with the closest building being built first. The green space in the parking lots is more than required.
- In response to a suggestion that there be entrances to the buildings on the side facing Prince Philip Dr, in addition to the entrances facing the parking lot, they indicated that the slope from the building to Prince Philip was too great. There is an 11 ft. drop to the roadway. Entrances on the ends of the building were also suggested so that people coming in from Prince Philip on foot, especially from the bus stop, do not have to walk all the way around the building. There was also a suggestion that they build into the slope with a half floor on that level which would allow an entrance from the street.
- In response to a suggestion that they build a second garage so the parking had a smaller footprint, they indicated the cost of garages is prohibitive. They have provided fewer parking spaces than the County requires. They are providing 250 additional spaces with 200 in the new garage decks over the ground level parking.
- The first building will be completed in 2-3 years, and the second 2-3 beyond that.
- They will do a traffic study and the County will determine if a traffic light is warranted at the intersection with the main entrance. They had not given any thought to a pedestrian bridge across Prince Philip, but the need for something like that will be shown through the traffic study.
- There will be a number of LEEDS features to the new buildings: a green roof, some storm water management features, and they will comply with whatever County LEEDS standards are in place when they construct the buildings. Thermal heating was suggested.
- They have submitted a Special Exception application for the 2 buildings and once it is approved, they will go through a complete site plan design process.

### **Legislative Wrap-Up**

Sharon welcomed the District 14 and 19 State Delegations and invited that each to say a few words about the legislative session that just ended:

Delegate Roger Manno, Dist. 19, noted what an incredible experience his first year had been, the steep learning curve for new delegates, and how much he appreciated the help the District 14 delegates had given him. Healthcare and insurance issues were key for him this session, noting legislation relating to long-term care insurance that would prevent insurance companies from considering the presence of genetic markers for a specific disease or condition as a pre-existing condition and legislation that adds the safety net needed from the State in connection with the gaps in Federal Medicare Part D. He introduced legislation to eliminate a transfer tax on homeowners whose homes are taken by eminent domain.

Delegate Herman Taylor, Dist. 14, noted how the special session before the regular session had been a difficult way to begin the session. As Chair of the Unemployment Insurance Committee, he had worked on legislation that provided a safety net for the unemployed, proposing coverage for part-time workers who pay into the system, but failed in the Senate; and he worked on legislation to outlaw graffiti with swastikas that was challenged on the basis of its conflict with freedom of speech and ended up requiring permission from a property owner to display such things. He also worked with Del. Kramer on expansion of the DNA database for violent criminals that had been challenged on 4<sup>th</sup> amendment issues.

Delegate Ben Kramer, Dist. 19, noted that he had worked on legislation to prevent financial exploitation of senior citizens who are vulnerable for a number of reasons by making it easier to prosecute these cases and to increase penalties for crimes against seniors beyond the penalty for the basic crime. He also worked on legislation expanding the taking of DNA from criminals so it can be done before a criminal is convicted and expediting criminal scene analysis.

Delegate Karen Montgomery, Dist. 14, served on the Health and Government Operations Committee. She noted the lack of gerontologists to treat the growing aging population. She worked on a freedom of speech issue preventing some police information from being posted on the internet or making it very expensive. She served on the regional Council of Governments working on transportation and safety issues. She worked on an evacuation plan for emergency situations. Georgia Avenue and Montgomery General Hospital are part of that plan. She also served on a task force looking at increasing the number of doctors in the State by waiving some tuition.

Senator Mike Lenett, Dist. 19, worked on bills relating to such matters as the Maryland Youth Advisory Bill that created a Council of Youth from all over the State to work with the legislative and executive branches of the Maryland government, and to handheld cell phones and text messaging that did not pass but will be introduced again next year. Another bill that did not pass, but will be introduced again next year relates to prohibiting

smoking in cars with children under 6 years old because of the sensitivity of their developing lungs. He also worked on legislation to increase controls on rogue firearms dealers.

Delegate Anne Kaiser, Dist 14, noted that three of the bills she worked on had been signed by the Governor that day. She noted that the House has 6 committees and the Senate has 4, so people become specialized in the areas covered by the committees they serve on because of the volume of bills that each committee works on. She serves on the Ways and Means Committee and chairs the subcommittee on Education. She worked on bills relating to creating programs for schools with high suspensions and high dropout rates; for disabled athletes, and to help deal with transitional issues for children of people in the military that relocate a lot. They will work with other states on this issue. She also worked on anti-bullying legislation giving principals more rights and making parents more aware of their rights; and on a range of bills relating to the current foreclosure problems.

Some points made during the question and answer period included:

- The legislators are very interested in hearing from their constituents because they are not experts on every issue so they need to work with citizens with certain interests or expertise
- Because of the expense of long-term care insurance, they are looking at creating a tax credit to encourage people to purchase this insurance at a much younger age so that it is more affordable.
- The County and State are interested in education campaigns promoting pedestrian safety.
- Mike Lenett received a response from the State Highway Administration noting that they would be straightening out the crosswalk across Rte. 108 on the west side of Rte. 97, accessible press button signals and count-down pedestrian signals are in design for that intersection, and they are looking at barriers to prevent people from crossing mid-block and directing them to crossing at the intersection.
- There is a need for more traffic violation enforcement.
- The delay in eliminating phosphates from cleaning products are occurring because manufacturers are not able to produce the products fast enough.
- People needing help with foreclosure issues can call the State at 1 800 462-7555 for advise on what they can do if being foreclosed.
- Mike Lenett is interested in hearing people's reactions to the speed cameras and the fairness of some of the locations of the cameras and issues such as having them operate near schools during non-school hours.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Proposed Monthly Channel 21 TV Show About Olney** – Because she had to leave early, Lisa Stancik explained her concept for a TV show about Olney early in the agenda. There has been a concern that it is difficult to get people to come to meetings, so she thought it would be useful to create a monthly TV show that we could use to get information to people. In the show we would answer the Top Ten Questions about Olney. They have already met with staff at Channel 21 who thought it was a unique idea in the County. The first show will air in July. People can submit questions view email, in writing, or by phone or talking with GOCA officers and delegates. Lisa is looking for people to be taped answering the questions. The program will be called the Olney Loop. Jazz music for the opening has been donated. The show will not be taped in the studio, but around the community. This is not a "GOCA" project, per se. Lisa saw a need for this kind of communication with the community and has taken this on as a personal project. She plans to tape portions of things like the Olney Town Meeting, and Olney Days and wants to promote other community events. She wants to project Olney to the greater community and there are events almost every month. She also wants to hear unique things about the Olney community.

**(NEW BUSINESS is continued below.)**

## **OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Treasurer's Report** – Roy Peck reported that the current balance is \$8,913.62

**Correspondence Report** – Bob Beard reported that the correspondence included a letter announcing an informal follow-up meeting on the proposed Oaks Landfill Methane Energy Project the next day; notices about the public hearing on the Ashton Meeting Place on May 15<sup>th</sup> and an open meeting on the Northwest Branch Master Plan issues and outreach on May 22<sup>nd</sup>; a Recycling newsletter; and information on several upcoming events such as the Taste of Wheaton on May 18<sup>th</sup> from 11 am – 5 pm.

**Olney Chamber of Commerce Report** – Joe Buffington noted that their annual Awards and Officer Installation Dinner will take place at the Inn of Brookeville Farms on June 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

**Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC)** – Bob Beard reported that Joe Buffington has replaced Sunita Bhatia on the Committee. He will represent small property owners in the town center area. Bob noted that the April 30<sup>th</sup> presentation of the draft illustrative concept of the Olney Master Plan went well. At this point it will be the last meeting of that sort except the presentation at the Olney Town Meeting during Olney Days. He will be presenting to the Olney Rotary Club on June 17<sup>th</sup>. And the next meeting of the OTCAC will be on May 27<sup>th</sup>. They meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month.

**Civic Federation Report** – Arnie Gordon reported that the Civic Federation discussed the fact that under the union contract negotiated by the County, county employees will get a 26-29% increase in pay over the next 3 years which is driving the deficit in the County. Councilmembers Duchy and Andrews are proposing that cost of living advances be reduced by 2% which will eliminate some of the compounding of the increases. They also discussed a clash between 2 builders in Bethesda at the Metro. One says that Georgetown Rd should count as open space for the 16-story building he wants to build, and the other builder disagrees.

**Membership Committee** – Matt Zaborsky reported that 20 associations are now members. They have paid \$1,750 in dues and \$1,500 in donations towards Olney Days which is an increase over last year's donations.

**Land Use Report – No report**

**President's Report** – Sharon Dooley noted that she attended the Olney Chamber/Brooke Grove Foundation Athena Award Luncheon. The award recognizes women in the community that have made noteworthy contributions either professionally-particularly mentoring women or as volunteers. This year's recipient is Robin Quinter.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Olney Days 2008** – Helene Rosenheim reviewed the schedule for the weekend and noted that she was still looking for volunteers to work at Olney Manor Park on Saturday afternoon and evening and during the parade helping in the staging area or as parade marshals along the parade route. Information on the Town Meeting that was scheduled to take place on the Saturday of Olney Days from 1- 3:30 pm at Oakdale Emory Church was noted. People were encouraged to attend to discuss a variety of issues impacting the Olney community.

## **NEW BUSINESS - continued**

**Oaks Landfill Methane Energy Project** – Helene Rosenheim reported that the County is proposing to install energy generating systems at the Oaks Landfill and the Gude Landfill that will capture the methane gas being released by the decaying materials in the landfills and convert it to energy that can be added to the energy grid in the County. They will not generate huge amounts of energy, but are part of a number of initiatives the County is undertaking to reduce the reliance on coal-burning energy generating systems that are polluting the air. They will use energy generated by the system to run the system itself and the balance is added to the County's energy grid. The landfill should generate methane gas for the next 20-50 years. The residents around the landfill do have a number of concerns, and a sense of a lack of trust of the County because of the history of problems they have had with the landfill such as the leaching of pollutants into their groundwater. The County is working very actively with the community to address their concerns and to raise their confidence level that this project will have a negligible impact on the air quality and sound levels in their area. The meeting mentioned during the Correspondence Report is a follow-up to a public meeting held by the State earlier which was required as a part of the permitting process for this system. The second meeting is being held by the County and the engineer in charge of the project from the company contracted to install and maintain the equipment will be there. There will not be any representatives from the State since this is not part of their permitting process, but is an effort by the County to respond to community concerns.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

*Kathleen Donodeo*

Kathleen Donodeo, Recording Secretary

**People in attendance:**

Ginia Angiola,(Norbeck Hills), Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Jackie & Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farms), Robert Berg (Hollow Tree Farm), Ron Berger (Norbeck Meadows), Benny Bienvenue (Our House Youth Home), Art Brodsky (Cherrywood), Joe Buffington (Chamber of Commerce), Keith Carlson (Hallowell), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Kathleen Donodeo (Hallowell), Dave Eskenazi (Norbeck Meadows), Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks), Jay Feinberg (Olney Oaks), Randi Godfrey (BS Troop 264), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Grace Gohs (Briars Acres), Jim Haddow (Hallowell), Norman Holley (Leisure World), Paul Jarosinski, Del. Anne Kaiser (District 14), Carolyn Knight (Olney Oaks), Del. Ben Kramer (District 19), Walter Lee (Environ, OTCAC), Sen. Mike Linnet (District 19), Diane Littlefield (Olney Acres), Del. Roger Manno (District 19), Amy & Holland McCabe (BS Troop 264), Jeannette Mendonca (Senator Rona Kramer's Office), Del. Karen Montgomery (District 14), Astrid Pages (James Creek), John Paulishak (Nash Country Estates), Roy Peck (Norbeck Meadows), Odessa Phillip (ICC Team), Theresa Kyne Robinson (Olney Oaks), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands/MCRSC/OTCAC), Lisa Stancik (Homeland Village), Anne Stretch (Cherrywood), Del. Herman Taylor (District 14), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), and Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows).