

DRAFT MINUTES – September 9, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President Sharon Dooley. The minutes from the July meeting were approved with 2 changes on Pg 2, 4th bullet, adding a comment from Paul Lilley regarding his willingness to support the ambulance fees if the legislation specified that fees would not be passed through to patients and that it stipulated that FRS would receive the funds from the raised by the fees; and Pg 5, adding Bob Beard's name to the list of attendees. The agenda was accepted with no changes or additions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Roy Peck noted that the State Highway Administration (SHA) has agreed to let people from the community dig up bulbs on Georgia Avenue in the area of the ICC construction before they begin digging in that area during the 1st quarter of 2009. However, the ground could be frozen or under snow at that point, plus it is better to replant bulbs in the fall. He is going to talk with Odessa Philips to explain the problem with the proposed timing and to see if it could be done on October 25th which is a Countywide Community Service Day,
- Arnie Gordon noted that he had been contacted by Bruce Adams regarding Community Service Day because they want as many groups as possible involved in some kind of community service projects throughout the County. The bulb removal project would be a good Community Service Day project. It was also suggested that GOCA have an Rte. 97/108 Intersection clean-up that day to get weeds out of the pedestrian/wheelchair cuts in the medians.
- Paul Jarosinski noted that there is a new map out of the redesign of the new connection of the ICC to Rte. 28, but he had not gotten a copy yet. From looking at it on the ICC website, it appears to show the 3rd northbound lane on Georgia Ave only going just north of the ICC rather than to Emory. Helene Rosenheim added that Odessa Philips will provide GOCA with a copy as soon as it is ready.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Street Paving in Olney – Sharon Dooley introduced Steve Suprata, Community Outreach and Notification Manager, Div of Highway Services, MC Dept of Transportation (DOT). Steve noted that the County began a more comprehensive community outreach effort about 2 years ago regarding road paving and similar projects. They send a DOT newsletter to affected communities.

The County has undertaken a new project to assess all county roads (5,000 miles) to measure the extent of their degradation and to assign a 5-level rating of very good to poor. They expect 60-70% to fall into the fair rating. They should have results of the rating project in November 2008. Based on the results of the ratings, they will schedule future road pavings. This will make the process of selecting roads to repave less subjective by identifying the roads that are in the greatest need of resurfacing. They used to use a chip product that lasted a long time and they could rotate through the county every 7-10 years. As the county has grown and the budget has gotten tighter, they have gone to other products – a slurry seal and a micropaver. Roads rated with poor surfaces will get a patch and sealing and a new layer of asphalt. Fair to Good and Good to Very Good roads will get a sealant. Arterials will get an asphalt overlay. Their goal is to repair poor roads plus keep good roads in good shape.

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

- Even though roads resurfaced in Cherrywood a couple of years ago are already beginning to crack, much faster than previous pavings, there are no immediate plans to come back into that neighborhood. It will depend on the rating that road receives. It was noted that, typically, the slurry lasts 5-7 years, the asphalt about 10 years, and a complete repaving about 20 years. Road surfaces do begin to deteriorate as soon as they are done.
- It costs \$14,000 - \$17,000 to resurface 1 mile of roadway. It is cost prohibitive to completely resurface everywhere in the County. It is most cost effective to maintain good roads with slurry and asphalt paving.
- Arnie Gordon commended the work of the contractor that did the repaving in the Norbeck Meadows community last year. They even reseeded areas where they had parked their trucks and damaged the grass.

- The report on the road ratings should be available online, probably, in November. Steve was not sure when the schedule of paving will be developed based on that report.
- Steve encouraged people to email him with their questions and concerns at steven.suprata@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Greater Sandy Spring Green Space – Sharon Dooley disclosed that she is on the Board of Directors for Greater Sandy Spring Green Space (GSSGS) before introducing Bobby Berg to give an update on the GSSGS' efforts to preserve green spaces in Olney. Bobby noted that his main reason for coming was to be sure our members were aware of the work being done by this group. There is a window of opportunity to preserve land before development gets approved and built. The GSSGS is a non-profit group started in 1998 to promote the preservation, protection and balanced use of land in the Patuxent watershed. This encompasses about a 6-mile radius around Sandy Spring and includes 5 master plan areas.

The conservation tools they use are to: (1) sign open space conservation easements with developers and individual property owners; (2) monitor conservation easement properties; and (3) do community outreach. They currently have 4 conservation areas; The Sandy Spring, in Auburn Village, in Bancroft, and in Ashton Preserve. They have standing on the Pulte property on Rte. 108, but no easement yet; and they are working on the Casey-Dunghy property but are making slow progress. Their formal plan is to inspect these properties every 2 years, but the key is maintaining a good relationship with the property owners so that when land is turned over in the future, the new people are made aware of the easement. He encouraged people to get involved with their organization.

Montgomery County Police Department Bike Program – Sharon Dooley introduced Paula Kahla, Olney Chamber of Commerce; and Sgt. Pries and Officer Dunn, MCPD Dist 4, Olney Satellite Station. Paula noted that the officers had come to the Chamber which oversees the funding for the Olney Satellite Station trailers to ask for funding to purchase bicycles to use to patrol the Olney area in and around the town center. Paula added that the Chamber had raised \$6,000 in donations from the community to purchase a second trailer for the satellite station and still have some of that funding. They raised \$1,500 at this year's National Night Out. They have had \$2,900 in expenses since the addition to the satellite station was built for repairs. They also have been getting \$4,500 each year from the County for a few years, but have to request the funding each year. So, there is no guarantee they will get that funding each year. They continue to occasionally get donations from groups like the Lions Club.

Paula noted that the Chamber purchased bicycles 7-8 years ago, but they are not up to current standards. They have priced bikes with the features they would like for \$1,200 each and they are asking for 3 bicycles. The Chamber thinks they can only purchase 1 bicycle now because they will also need to purchase a storage system for the trailer for the bicycles. They have also asked that the cycles only be used in Olney.

Sgt. Pries noted that he has been with the MCPD for 15 years and was assigned to the Olney Satellite Station about 10 months ago. He noted that he had the 2 bicycles they had repaired so he could create a bike patrol, but the 2 bikes are "ragged out" and they lack features required by the State – no lights, and no audible warning system. The bicycles are used for events like National Night Out, but also in the neighborhoods. There are a lot of bike paths throughout the community that can be used to respond to calls and to patrol; and can, at times, allows them to get places faster than by car. The cycles allow them to come up more stealthfully on people vandalizing or misbehaving. They also allow for better interaction with people than in their cars. They have been a very useful tool that they want to continue using. Officer Gunn added that he has been a life-long resident in Olney, so takes his job to heart and as a member of the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department, he knows how generous this community is. Sgt. Pries noted that they can have 3-4 officers on a shift for Olney, and can put 1-2 officers on bikes and still have officers to respond to calls further out in the area.

Sharon Dooley noted that there has been a lack of calls for small crimes, but stressed that it is important that even small crimes be reported for the statistics on criminal activity in the area. Sgt. Pries added that a number of times he had gotten emails about incidents, but found that they had not been reported. He noted that it is important that even small incidents be reported, at least through the Police Department's telephone reporting system, in order for him to justify his requests for resources. Also, investigating and/or solving a small crime may lead to arrests for bigger crimes. Even though it was noted that they would not be able to use the bicycles in inclement weather, they noted that criminal activity also goes down during periods of inclement weather. So, they would be able to use the bicycles during most periods of higher criminal activity. They can be used to search for people who go into the woods with paths, and they can result in less confrontational encounters with people. Montgomery Village and Silver Spring do have Segways, and District 4 has 1 officer certified to train on them, but they prefer the bicycles, especially for exercise and speed.

Paula noted that donations for the purchase of bicycles can be sent to the Olney Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 550, Olney, MD 20830. She also added that they would appreciate civic and homeowners associations setting up annual donations to the Chamber for the satellite station.

Development Proposal for the Golden Bear Golf Center Site – Sharon Dooley introduced Bob Harris to present the development proposal for the Golden Bear Gold Center site on between Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Rd just north of the Park and Ride lot. This project encompasses 31 of the 85 acres in that location and is called Greenbriar of Norbeck Crossing. In the master plan process, the County determined that this would be a good location for affordable housing, especially with the public transportation there, the proposed Olney busway, and the ICC. It was set up as Transfer of Development Rights receiving area at a level of TDR-7 (7 units per acre over the 85 acres). This property owner has control of 31 acres with a piece in the center owned by the WSSC. At the time of the master plan study, Winchester Homes had this property under contract, but dropped that contract. That was for 300+ units, but involved more acreage. The property owner is proceeding with this development proposal for 256 detached units, townhouses through the center, and 5 multi-family, low-rise, 4-story units. The zone requires 40% green space, and they are providing 75%. That includes some recreational uses, some green space, and some buffering. An amendment was filed recently, but no hearing date set yet – will probably be in 2 months.

Their main entrance will almost be opposite Norbeck Blvd. It cannot be directly opposite because of the existing house opposite the Leisure World entrance. There will be a second access on Norbeck onto the side road to the Park and Ride Lot that will be reconfigured directly to Norbeck when the Rte. 28/97 intersection improvement is built. The easternmost entrance will be a right turn in-right turn out entrance. Their density is a result of 7 units per acre x 31 acres = 217 + 22% increase for MPDU's (with 15% being MPDU's) = 256 units. There are no plans for any work force housing because they are currently limited to developments around Metro stations. Their traffic mitigation includes adding another westbound left turn lane on Rte. 28, and minor non-road mitigation at Norbeck Blvd. And, if the Rte. 28/97 interchange is built before their development is built, their money goes towards that project. It has not yet been determined whether the property owner will build the extra lane or just dedicate the money. Roy noted that SHA will be adding a northbound lane south of the ICC that does not seem to be reflected in their plan, and suggested that they coordinate with SHA to see what, if any impact that additional lane will have on their development.

They anticipate residents here using the public transportation. Students living in this development will go to Flower Valley ES, Earle B. Wood MS, and Rockville HS. The MPDU's have been integrated into the townhouses. And, they have included stormwater management areas to address some drainage problems in the Leisure World areas. The project will likely be built by someone else, after the property owner gets his approvals from the Park and Planning Commission.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer's Report – Roy Peck reported that the current balance in the accounts is \$5,010.17 and that we have not received any income from Joe's Ride yet.

Correspondence Report – Sharon Dooley reported that the correspondence included a letter from the Planning Board on travel trips required for the Sunrise Senior Living project on Rte. 108. 25% of the PM traffic mitigation is being met by paying \$20,000, so they can move ahead with their project. We still do not know what the level of staffing will be.

Olney Chamber of Commerce Report – No Report

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) Report– Jim Smith reported that the OTCAC expects to be engaged with the Freeman Company on the public purpose use space that will part of their development in the lower portion of their centers. So, the Committee is putting together a general description of the uses we hope to see in a civic center in the town center. That includes a teen center, the police substation, the Chamber office and a visitors center, a Mid-County Regional Center space, a large green space, and meeting room space. The Freeman Co. must resolve some stormwater management and traffic mitigation issues before they can address the public purpose space. The OTCAC is wrapping up work on the illustrative concept of the town center that will be presented to the Planning Board and to the County Council's Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee soon. Kim Damion has resigned as the representative from the Freeman Co. to the OTCAC because she was laid off from their company. They are continuing to work with the Freeman Co on designating a representative because it is important to keep a representative from their company on the Committee because they control 30 of the 90 sq. acres in the town center.

The makeup of the committee includes residents from 4 homeowners association. However, they do not specifically represent their homeowners association, but just that aspect of the community along with individuals from the business community, government-like organizations, and small and large property owners. So, when one member from an HOA moved from one development to another in the Olney area, it was felt that she should be able to continue serving on the Committee. If a vacancy arises within the 4 HOA seats, an invitation will be extended to all HOA's and CA's in area, with the understanding that some should be from developments within or adjacent to the town center and some should be from the greater Olney area. Their next meeting is on September 23rd at the Olney Library.

In the comments following Jim's presentation it was noted that: (1) there is a real need for a movie theater in the town center, and (2) there needs to be better trash pick up in the town center, especially at the bus stops that also need benches and shelters, and possibly containers for recycling.

Civic Federation Report – Arnie Gordon noted that the Park and Planning Commission will be holding sessions on the following Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday to get input on rewriting the zoning ordinances. Civic Federation will be hosting 5 seminars between now and June 2009 on zoning and land use (10/18), property tax assessment appeals, code enforcement, and liability of CA/HOA officers. At their last meeting they had a presentation on the County's labor union regulations. At their October meeting, the League of Women Voters will be discussing the ballot referendums. And, at their September meeting, they did take a position in opposition to the ambulance fee proposal. The public comments to the Council to date have been 7-1 opposed. Sharon Dooley noted that the issue has not gone to the full Council yet, so GOCA can still take a position and will consider that at the October meeting.

Membership Report – No report.

Land Use Report – No Report

President's Report – Sharon Dooley noted that she had met with Bob Hellerson and invited him to come to a future meeting. The GOCA officers met with Khalid Afzal at their meeting to discuss a number of issues, including the SHA proposal to add a new northbound lane from Rte. 28 to the ICC and that GOCA did not want it built to Emory. He assured the officers that it would not be built to Emory. The Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department will host its annual Open House on October 4th, 1:00-4:00 pm at the Georgia Ave station. Sharon noted that the residents can sign up to receive Alerts from the County relating to emergency situations like problems related to severe weather conditions, although, it did not work as well as expect during the recent storm. However the County has given assurances that the Alert system will work better in the future. She encouraged people to sign up by going to <https://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov>. And, she noted that Olney Community Night and Taste of Olney will take place on October 3rd at Longwood Recreation Center.

OLD BUSINESS

State Highway Administration Issues – Sharon Dooley reported that she had written a letter to the State Highway Administration (SHA) outlining some of the issues we have been discussing with them as a follow-up to some emails she has received from them. Some of the issues related to signalization at the Rte. 97/108 intersection, and the Rte. 108 entrance to the Olney Shopping Center, especially emphasizing the need for a crosswalk at that entrance.

The Olney Loop Cable TV Show – Lisa Stancik reported that she is looking for ideas for the October show and reminded everyone that the show airs on Sundays on 9:30 pm and Wednesdays at 6:00 pm on Montgomery Access on Channel 21 on both Comcast and Verizon Fios TV. Each months show is repeated on those days each week during that month. So, there are many opportunities to see the show.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Special Presentations:

Golden Bear Development Proposal – Discussion was tabled until the October meeting.

Request for Funding for Bicycles for the MCPD Olney Satellite Station – Following a brief discussion, the consensus was that GOCA should donate \$600 for now and look at making additional donations after Roy does a review to be sure we have enough money to cover any anticipated upcoming expenses.

Following a reminder that there will be a 9/11 vigil at the Rte. 97/108 intersection on Thursday at 7:30 pm, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Donodeo

Kathleen Donodeo, Recording Secretary

People in attendance:

Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Jackie & Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Ron Berger (Norbeck Meadows), Brad Branch (Olney Mill), Art Brodsky (Cherrywood), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Dave Eskenazi (Norbeck Meadows), Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks), Kevin Flannery (Leisure World), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Chuck Graefe (SEAROCA), Grace Grohs (Briars Acres), Off. Dan Gunn (MCPD), Bob Harris (Holland-Knight), Terri Hogan (Gazette), Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Paula Kahla (Olney Chamber), Carolyn Knight (Olney Oaks), Jim Lasswell (Hallowell), Walter Lee (Environ, OTCAC), Astrid Pages (James Creek), Dale Ann Pearlson (Homeland Village), Roy Peck (Norbeck Meadows), Sgt. Bill Preis (MCPD), Theresa Kyne Robinson (Olney Oaks), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands/MCRSC/OTCAC), Robin Shea (Oatland Farm), Anne Stretch (Cherrywood), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Louis Wilen (Cherrywood), Catherine Womack (James Creek), and Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows).