

## MINUTES – May 12, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Sharon Dooley at 7:50 p.m. The minutes from the April meeting were approved. The agenda was accepted.

### Public Comments

- Matt Zaborsky asked that when signing in folks indicates on the sign in sheet by use of a “D” or an “A” whether they are representing their community as a delegate or alternate. Matt advised us that prior to the June meeting there would be a Community Conversation starting at 7:00 p.m. re the deer problem and would be called Deerzilla as named by the Washington Post.
- Representatives from the Olney Farmers and Artisans Market talked of events that would be taking place each Sunday during the market time featuring a different merchant each week and culminating with a final event in October to be hosted by the Sandy Spring Museum in conjunction with their Gala.
- Dan Zabairi was passing around a petition to be signed by all who would like to in attempt to get rid of the speed cameras that are popping up all over our area and Montgomery County as a whole. He was hoping to have the issued place on the next ballot for a referendum. He suggested for more information that folks go to the web site about this [MDSCamera.com](http://MDSCamera.com).
- In Helene Rosenheim’s absence, Jackie and Danny Benn circulated sign-up sheets for volunteers for Olney Days events for Saturday and Sunday.
- Sharon Dooley reported that in thanks to a large community effort which she spearheaded, the route 53 ride-on bus had been SAVED. Sharon wanted to thank all those who signed the petitions and came out to hearings in force.

### SPECIAL PRESENTATION

**Legislative Wrap-Up:** The first and major part of the special presentation featured representatives from Annapolis. Introduced to the meeting were Senator Rhona Kramer, Delegate Karen Montgomery, Delegate Anne Kaiser Delegate Herman Taylor, Delegate Roger Manno, and Delegate Ben Kramer. Each presenter was allowed 5-10 minutes to describe their individual areas of representation. Senator Rhona Kramer expressed the difficulties her Budget and Taxation Committee had faced this year. Important to our area was the funding received for the Olney Theater and OBGC Boys and Girls Club. This was in the form of capital funding that she had worked on along with the Delegates. Delegate Karen Montgomery gave the meeting a very brief overview of Health and Government operations including help to small businesses with few than 19 employees to offer health insurance. Delegate Anne Kaiser talked about Ways and Means which was her area of focus. She appreciated the help she received from citizens and gave a shout out to Louis Wilen for bringing to her attention the Homestead Credit act which had now saved the state more than was even originally projected. She asked that other citizens step forward as Louis had done and if you think something should be a law then call it in because possibly it could become a law. Delegate Herman Taylor stated that he was the House Economics Matters Committee Chair. He talked of working as a team and applauded Delegate Karen Montgomery for her work this past session. He went on to outline some bills that had passed this session particularly bills helping owners of small businesses and private contractors. Delegate Roger Manno thanked the folks he represented who were present at the meeting for helping elect him to his first term. He had worked on the Small Business Health Insurance Expansion Act, Health Care Discrimination and End-of-Life counseling along with many other bills. Delegate Ben Kramer spoke briefly about the Judiciary Committee and a focus of their work had been on protecting senior residents. He also talked about reform for hate crimes, gender crimes and crimes against the disabled. The presenters then answered a range of questions from the assembled including issues pertaining to the ICC, the intersection at 97/28, speed cameras, and budgetary issues. The Senator and Delegates were thanked by Sharon Dooley for attending and were invited to stay if they wished for the rest of the meeting.

**SEROCA's position concerning development of 3110 Emory Church Road by First Baptist Church of Wheaton:** Chuck Graefe of SEROCA read a statement outlining SEROCA's opposition to the proposed development of 3110 Emory Church Road by the First Baptist Church of Wheaton. Among SEROCA's reasons for opposition was the fact that this 800 seat institution would be situated in the center of a residential community of 33 homes which would be overwhelmed by a church of this size particularly on Sunday mornings. SEROCA was also concerned of the environmental impact by having an institution of this size built. SEROCA asked that GOCA join SEROCA in opposing this development. Discussion of the matter included a suggestion that the Church be given a chance to come to talk to GOCA at the next meeting and explain their position. **A motion was proposed by Arnie Gordon and seconded by Bob Beard that: GOCA oppose the proposed construction by First Baptist Church of Wheaton as (1) being the cause of an excessive amount of traffic, (2) not in keeping with the Master Plan and (3) creating a park lot in the middle of a residential community.** During discussion of the motion Matt Zaborsky stated that he felt GOCA was

climbing a slippery slope without hearing from the Church. The church had been invited to attend our meeting in January by Sharon Dooley. Dave Eskenazi wanted to know the timing of the whole process. He wanted to know if a preliminary plan had been done yet or was they still in the stage of working on drawings. He reminded us that GOCA had opposed sewer and water. Dave suggested that Parks and Planning be asked not to proceed until they present to GOCA. After further discussion a **second motion was proposed by Bob Beard and seconded by Barbara Falcigno that: The motion be tabled for 30 days to allow the Church to be invited to present to GOCA. The motion was voted on and passed with 19 votes for the motion, 18 against the motion and no abstentions.**

**Our House:** Benny Bienvenue of Our House was introduced by Sharon Dooley. Benny told us that Our House is located on Zion Road and Route 108 and is a 140 acre property. It is a residential program for at risk kids approximately aged 16-20 whose stay is in the region of 13 months. It provides the kids with an opportunity to learn job skills during the day and academics in the evenings. The proposed development included a green dorm with fleshless toilets as they were reclaiming the water and roof photo electric cell. The dirt was being made into bricks and the construction where possible was being done mostly by the kids. Currently there are 24 resident kids and 11 full time staff but there is a staff of 21 total who man the facility 24/7. Benny described the program as being very successful since few if any of the kids who resided at Our House had reoffended for a success rate of over 80%. The kids are very friendly and very respectful when going into the community. In answer to a question Benny stated that Our House currently has an organic garden and 8 beehives. Benny was thanked for his work with the kids and for his presentation by Sharon Dooley.

## **OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS**

### **Treasurer's Report:**

In Roy Peck's absence there was no Treasurer's Report.

### **Correspondence Report:**

Ruth advised that there was nothing new to report.

### **Chamber of Commerce Report:**

Joe Buffington passed out fliers and introduced the iBuyOlney.com website and program. He hoped that website would be up and running by June and hoped to have more information available at Olney Days. The program was largely to keep purchasing within the local economy wherever possible which is considered green since it saves on gas and is giving back to the community.

### **Olney Town Center Advisory Committee Report:**

Bob Beard that approximately 2 weeks ago the Library had brought their proposed expansion plans to the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee and that work was due to start September 2010.

### **Civic Federation Report:**

Arnie reported on the huge sad loss of Wayne Goldstein to the Civic Federation and the community. Arnie advised that at the Civic Federation banquet this coming Friday the Parents Coalition of Montgomery County was going to be receiving the Gazette Award for the work they had been doing to question MCPS on its management of the school system. Arnie had testified on 09-01 supporting the zoning text amendment.

### **Membership Report:**

Matt Zaborsky reported that per the GOCA bylaws allowed to vote were 2 delegates from each association that were dues paying, the past presidents and current GOCA officers. We currently have 29 dues paying associations, 7 GOCA officers and 12 past presidents for a total of 77 votes. Per the bylaws a quorum equals 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the official voting membership for 16 minimum official votes. Matt has copies available to send to any delegate who would like a copy and asked they just email their request to him. Matt thanked Dave Eskenazi, Helene Rosenheim and Ron Berger who helped him in compiling the information.

### **Transportation Report:**

Dave Eskenazi reported that all was quiet at the moment. He was working with SHA to schedule a walking tour of the planned ICC and is awaiting a date. Those walking will need to wear heavy shoes. Sneakers will not work.

**President's Report:**

Sharon thanked Roger Manno and others who went to bat for us along with others to get a delay to the closing of Georgia Avenue. SHA is now putting sidewalks on both sides of Georgia Avenue between Tidewater and Queen Elizabeth. The Welcome to Olney sign is looking somewhat scruffy and there were dead trees found. Good Earth has agreed to donate their labor to pulling out trees and tidying up the area including planting new plants. The Executive Board approved the purchase of the plants since we get a good deal of our profit from the Banners at Georgia and 108. Because the land is owned by the State we do need the State's permission to remove the dead trees and currently the application is in process. Benny Bienvenue offered for his kids from Our House to paint the sign any time that was needed. Sharon received an application going to the Planning Board shortly about the Marian Brothers property. Manor Oaks is very concerned about this construction. Sharon mentioned the huge accident at Georgia Avenue and Owens Boulevard which is a notoriously bad intersection at day and night. Sharon was hoping that in talks with Parks and Planning when discussing the proposed Marian Brothers property a case could be made for putting in a turn lane or even protected turn lane at that intersection.

**OLD BUSINESS****Olney Days 2009 Report:**

Jackie and Danny Benn gave a brief report in Helene's absence. They informed us that the Montgomery section of the Washington Post on Thursday was stating that Olney Days was a best bet. It was hoped that REMAX would have a hot air balloon offering rides and some of the other highlights were a roaming juggler, concerts and of course the favorite fire engine rides. The evening on Saturday was going to culminate with fireworks. Sunday along with the car show at Fletchers and the parade a new event was the concert at Olney Town Center featuring local school bands and a professional band.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Sharon reminded all who were eligible of the election on Tuesday, May 19 2009 and informed all of a forum to be held at Sherwood High School at 7:00 p.m. on May 13, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous motion at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lori Wilen  
Lori Wilen, Recording Secretary

**PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ellen Bogage (Victoria Springs); Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm); Jackie Benn (Fair Hill Farm); Roger Manno (State Delegate); Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows); Tara Holl-Lombard (Olney Farmers and Artisans Market); Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village); Daniel Walsh (Cherrywood); Herman Taylor (State Delegate); Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village); Brad Branch (Olney Mill); Anne Kaiser (State Delegate); Benny Bienvenue (Our House); Theresa Kyne Robinson (Olney Oaks); Chuck Graefe (SEROCA); Jon Morrison (Oak Grove); Ben Kramer (D-19); Sen. Rhona Kramer (D-14); Daniel Zubairi (MRE); Bob Beard (Homeland Village); Joe Buffington (Olney Chamber of Commerce); Steve Cohen (Oak Grove); Lisa Stancik (HVCA); Karen Montgomery (Brookeville); Ron Berger (NMCA); Jim Haddow (Halowell); Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows); Sharon Dooley (James Creek); Lori Wilen (Cherrywood); Ed Weisel (NMCA); Art Brodsky (Cherrywood); Dave Eskenazi (NMCA); Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks); Louis Wilen (Cherrywood); Gus Tseronis; Selen Singleton (Office of Donna Edwards); Astrid Pages (James Creek); John Webster (Manor Oaks); Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood); Christie Berman; Guled Kassim, Walter Lee (Townes); Terri Hogan (Gazette); Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood); Charles Kuebler (James Creek)