

## **DRAFT MINUTES – January 12, 2010**

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

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

**Renovation Plans for the Olney Town Center (formerly Olney Town Shopping Center)** – Chris Garland, VP for Development, Freeman Retail, presented the plans for renovating the Olney Town Center.

The following are some of the points Mr. Garland made during his presentation and the question & answer period that followed:

- The renovation they are doing will expand the square footage of the center by 10% which is the limit of expansion they can do without having to go through a full development review process. Under the current economy, a full development review process would be cost prohibitive and this renovation allows them to give the center a facelift that will keep the center viable until the economy improves.
- They tried to bring in another movie vendor, but with the current trend of many theaters, many more than the Olney Cinema had, with stadium seating, they would have needed to expand the square footage beyond the 10% threshold for the review process. So, for now, a movie theater is not economically possible for the Freeman Company.
- Harris Teeter did 2 years of market research before deciding that they wanted to come to the Olney area, but hadn't been able to find a location until this opportunity presented itself.
- They will be changing the name of the center to the Fair Hill Center.
- They will be improving the entrance on Rte. 108 closest to Spartan with design elements that will help alert drivers to pedestrian in that area and make the traffic movements into and out of the Center there safer.
- Their plan is to put several restaurants in the corner east of the Harris Teeter store with outdoor seating and to create a plaza in that corner, possibly with a fountain that would be a space where events like their summer concerts could be held. The corner could seat about 500-600 people, with 200-300 in the plaza area and an additional 200-300 in the parking lot immediately adjacent to the plaza area.
- Construction began on Dec 28<sup>th</sup> with some internal modification of their infrastructure so the tire store can continue to operate during the construction. Construction will take about 12-18 months. It will include reconfiguration of the parking lot, a plaza in the corner of the 2 legs of the center, and a new façade for the whole structure. Construction is expected to be completed by January 2011 with Harris Teeter opening during the summer of 2011. The major demolition of the building will begin in March 2010 to push out the front of the space BJ Pumpnickel was in about 10 ft.
- Subway is being relocated, Green Turtle is coming into the space the Olney Tavern occupied and the adjacent store front. And, they are still talking with Barry Schwartz about relocating. They are also talking with a number of national and local stores and restaurants.
- The Olney Farmers and Artists Market will need to find a new location for this year because much of the lot will be used as a staging area for the reconstruction, and they will need parking for the businesses that are remaining open during the construction. Also, there is a safety issue during the construction.
- It was noted that there is often a conflict between cars using the KFC's drive-thru and cars going to or coming from the Chevy Chase Bank and a request was made to look at improving that arrangement when the parking lot is being reconfigured.
- There was also a request for a sidewalk along side of the ramp between the 2 shopping centers.
- There was also a suggestion that the plaza be designed so it can be converted to an outdoor skating rink in the winter.

**Census 2010** – Eric Lachica, a Community Partnership Specialist for the Census Bureau gave an overview of the upcoming Census which is done every 10 years. This is one of the most challenging censuses ever because of the large immigrant population in the country. If an accurate count is not done, Maryland could lose a Congressional seat. Taxes are distributed by population. An area can lose \$30,000 in Federal funding for each person not counted. The Census questionnaire should arrive between March 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>. Census Day is April 1. It will only take about 10 minutes to fill out the form. Shortly after April 1, the Census Bureau will send people to the homes they did not received forms from. It costs the government about \$100 per form to collect those not returned by mail. Federal law prohibits the Census Bureau from sharing information with other agencies. Plus, there is nothing on the form that personally identifies the individual completing it.

The Census Bureau will be hiring about 1,000 people in Montgomery County. The workforce needs to be diverse because of the diversity of the population in the County. They are looking for testing sites. They will be paying from \$14 to \$20.75, depending on the job. This workforce will be needed from mid-February through May-June, with a few continuing on until September. There are part-time and full-time positions and much of the work is done in the evening and on weekends. Their office is at 2400 Research Blvd in Rockville.

**Pending Code Enforcement Legislation** – Arnie Gordon noted that there were three pieces of legislation relating to code enforcement that are pending before the County Council, but not being acted on in a timely manner. These are all changes recommended by the County Executive's Work Group on Code Enforcement, but which the Council has not taken action on. The legislation that is pending is Bill 22-09 which authorizes an enforcement agency to issue a notice of violation to enforce certain County laws and limits and clarifies the jurisdiction of the Board of Appeals regarding certain enforcement actions taken by certain enforcement agencies; Bill 24-09 which would invalidate building permits for residential projects not completed within 18 months, and provides for the possibility of a 6-month extension and revise inspection requirements for certain dwelling units; and Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 09-03 relating to home occupations, off-street parking of commercial vehicles, and the amount of area that can be provided for parking and use and occupancy permits for single-family detached residences.

**Arnie Gordon moved that:**

**GOCA SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, BILL 22-09 AND 24-09 AND ZTA 09-03.**

**Barbara Falcigno seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**Representative Donna Edwards, District 4, US House of Representative** – Sharon Dooley welcomed Ms. Edwards

The following are some of the points Ms. Edwards made during her presentation and in response to questions:

- They are making progress with healthcare legislation, but there are still lots of hurdles. They hope to have action completed in the next few days.
- Her office is also very involved with the 2010 Census.
- District 4 has a lot of pockets of population that have changed and a lot that have not been counted correctly in the past. This affects the funding the areas receive for transportation, healthcare including community clinics, and Title 1 schools
- Both Montgomery and Prince Georges County have had increases in population and population counts affect the amount of legislative representation in an area.
- They will be working on a jobs package. It will be used for green infrastructure and sewer and water infrastructure. This is just scratching the surface on the need to maintain these kinds of infrastructure that have been neglected for years. They also hope some of it will be used to fund the Purple Line.
- They are doing work with community banks to get them to start lending money to small businesses more.
- They will soon be beginning the appropriation cycle for the coming fiscal year. Beginning 2/12, people will be able to go to her website to register requests for specific projects. She does submit requests for non-profit organizations, government agencies, and educational institutions.
- Her District offices are now 95% staffed. Amanda Partington, who is from Olney, was recently hired to do case work and outreach to seniors. She has several interns and rotates them through all of her offices to give them a breadth of experience.
- The State had to make the Rte. 97/28 intersection project a priority to get funding and the County Executive and County Council have to make it a priority first.
- She will look into the Federal Impact Funding that used to exist in the 80's and 90's in areas with large Federal facilities that did not pay taxes to the local jurisdiction.
- She will look into some legislation that may be placing some excessive burdens on local farmers.

### **OFFICERS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Treasury Report** - No report

**Correspondence Report** - Ruth Laughner noted correspondence from Greater Sandy Spring Greater Green Space and a letter from the Zambelli Fireworks Company.

**Chamber Report** – No Report

**Olney Town Center Advisory Committee** - Bob Beard reported that there is currently a vacancy on the Committee for an individual nominated by a homeowners or civic association; that they have supported the Olney Farmers and Artists Market in their desire to remain in the Olney Town (Shopping) Center. Jim Smith noted that the Committee had already been given a presentation by the Freeman Company on their proposal for renovating the Olney Town (Shopping) Center. While it is not a redevelopment that will trigger the optional development method available under the Mixed Use-Town Center Zone, and it would not immediately help get closer to the Master Plan goals for the town center or help get a civic center in the future, the Committee felt it could support the renovation because it would help to maintain the center that would otherwise go into decline until the economy improves enough for the Freemans to do more of the kind of redevelopment anticipated in the Master Plan.

**Civic Federation Report** – Arnie Gordon noted that he did not have anything additional to report beyond the code enforcement legislation discussed earlier in the meeting.

**Transportation Report** - Dave Eskenazi reported that Odessa Philip, the ICC Outreach Specialist for Phase A has been reassigned to other ICC duties doing outreach in connection with the toll structure. The spokesperson for Phase A of the ICC is now Carla Julian who works for the construction company

**Membership Report** - Matt Zaborsky reported that the 2010 billing has been sent out, some to the property management companies for several HOAs and CAAs. The billing letter stressed making a contribution towards Olney Days. And, we have already received dues from Olney Oaks. He will be speaking to the Williamsburg Village CA, and is going to the Fair Hill Farm HOA.

**President's Report** - Sharon Dooley reported that she had attended the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee meeting to talk about the Farmers Market and a variety of other meetings, including one on the Sandy Spring Village Center revitalization effort. GOCA had received a request from PROJECT CHANGE to partner with them in responding to a request from MANNA to help with a food drive they are holding at 20 Giant Food stores, including the one in Olney, on Martin Luther King Day from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. PROJECT CHANGE needs adult volunteers to help supervise the youth that will be volunteering that day.

She also noted that the Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> hearing on the 32-acre site on Bowie Mill Rd has been postponed. No new date set yet.

## OLD BUSINESS

### 2010 GOCA Officers Nominations:

Helene Rosenheim reported for Ron Berger that the balloting for the 2010 GOCA Officers will take place at the end of the February meeting. There are candidates for all the offices except Recording Secretary. The slate includes:

President – Matt Zaborsky  
Executive Vice President – Jim Haddow  
First Vice President – Ellen Bogagte  
Second Vice President – Lori Wilen  
Treasurer – Roy Peck  
Corresponding Secretary – Ruth Laughner  
Recording Secretary – Vacant

She encouraged people to consider running for the Recording Secretary position.

### 2009 GOCA Awards

Helene Rosenheim reported for Ron Berger that we had received a number of nominations for the 2009 GOCA awards. We will be sending ballots to the 2 delegates for each member association in good standing, i.e., paid their 2009 dues. The ballots are due back by the February meeting where the ballots will be tallied. The ceremony where the awards will be presented will take place on Sunday, March 7, 2010 at Longwood Recreation Center with a reception that a number of elected officials attend at 2:00 pm and the awards presentations at 3:00 pm. She encouraged members to attend and to encourage their family, friends, and neighbors to attend as well.

Following the discussion of Old Business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Helene Rosenheim for Lori Wilen*  
Lori Wilen, Recording Secretary

### People in attendance:

Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Jackie & Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farms), Ellen Bogage (Victoria Springs), Brad Branch (Olney Mill), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village), Kathleen Curtis (Lake Hollowell), Kathy Donedeo (Hollowell), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Rep. Donna Edwards (Dist 4), Dave Eskenazi (Norbeck Meadows), Anna Fader (Census Bureau), Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Chuck Graefe (SEROCA), Jim Haddow (Hollowell), Terri Hogan (Gazette), Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Dolly Kildee (Councilmember Navarro), Charlie Kuebler (James Creek), James Lanus (Olney Theater), Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village), Walter Lee (Township of Environ), Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres), Del Roger Manno (Dist 19), Buck Parr (Tanterra), Audrey Partington (James Creek), Selena Richardson (Rep Donna Edwards), Helene Rosenheim (Mid-County RSC), Analisa Rusnack (Census Bureau), Pam Saul (Sen. Rona Kramer, Dist 14), Desmond Serrett (Census Bureau), Valerie Shipman (Olney Theater), Jim Smith (Oatland Farms), Lisa Stancik (Homeland Village), Ann Stretch (Cherrywood), Kesi Striibling (Census Bureau), Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood), John Webster (Manor Oaks), Jessica Weiss (Sandy Spring Growing Soul), and Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows),