

Minutes - June 14, 2011

President Matt Zaborsky called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Arnie Gordon moved to approve the agenda, and Kathy Curtis seconded. Then Arnie Gordon moved to approve the minutes, and Lydia Rappolt seconded.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

1. Sharon Dooley announced that the Sandy Spring Museum was offering \$50 raffle tickets for a \$10,000 Dream “Trip for Two.” The deadline for purchasing the tickets is July 16, 2011, and more information can be found at <http://www.sandyspringmuseum.org/museum/events/Brochure.%20April%202029.pdf>. Only 1,000 tickets will be sold, and there will only be one winner.
2. Matt Zaborsky introduced the Maryland Districts 2 and 4 legislators, a congressional aide, and Districts 2 and 4 councilmembers and stated that only GOCA delegates would be seated at the table. He also introduced Lt. Mark Yamada, the new deputy district commander of the Wheaton police station who was born and raised in Wheaton and worked undercover for the department for 18 years.
3. Paul Jarosinski thanked the legislators who had been supportive of the effort to restore the second left turn lane for those turning onto Route 28 from northbound Route 97.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: District 2 and 4 Councilmembers - Budget Update

1. Nancy Navarro, District 4 councilwoman, stated the budget this year was about sustainability, restructuring, and consolidation, but the council managed to restore funding for:
 - a. Public safety (increase of police officers in District 4 and the restoration of all the police substations)
 - b. Park and planning department (Master Plans for East County Science Center, Burtonsville, Glenmont, and Sandy Spring)
 - c. Libraries (\$23 million, which includes one position restored at Aspen Hill Library)
 - d. Youths (free rides on Ride-on buses and the continuation of the youth café) Suggested by her Youth Advisory Board, the Teen Escape Club Youth Café provides a safe and positive environment for teens and fosters creativity. Piloted in District 4, Councilwoman Navarro secured \$15,000 for the program to continue, and one is planned for Olney.
 - e. Education (K-12, Montgomery College, and Gaithersburg’s out-of-school suspension program (G-Sharp)). See <http://g-sharp.org/>

Councilwoman Navarro encouraged us to read her newsletter that shows her budget priorities in addressing the structural deficit to preserve Montgomery County’s AAA bond rating. View the letter at:
http://myemail.constantcontact.com/FY12-County-Budget.html?soid=1103877561965&aid=HKgA_IZDA2w

2. Craig Rice, District 2 councilman, stated the council also managed to restore funding for:
 - a. School resource officers
 - b. Victim services

However, Councilman Rice is concerned about the future of the school resource officers (SRO) program because the school system may have to pay for the officers next year.

The councilmembers then answered questions.

1. Bob Beard asked for support in spending the \$154, 000 Safeway mitigation money in Olney and listed the following suggestions: a pedestrian crossing between Giant and Safeway, visual traffic calming – road markings to create narrower lanes between Georgia Avenue and Appomattox Avenue for safety, stairs behind the library and the parking lot of the Olney Grill, connecting the existing sidewalk with Vintage River Terrace, and pedestrian crossing on Morningwood at the North High Street steps. Nancy Navarro stated a community’s specific plans to improve pedestrian safety can help guide legislators.
2. Arnie Gordon said Intercounty Connector dump trucks had greatly damaged Emory Lane between Georgia Avenue and Muncaster Mill and asked the legislators to assess it and require Maryland to repave it.
3. Sharon Dooley stated she had testified before the county council in favor of Olney continuing with both District 2 and District 4 legislators, and Craig Rice shared another community that has only one district legislator would appreciate more representation, and we have benefitted from having two sets. He also shared our state legislators worked in tandem with the councilmembers during this recent legislative session and succeeded in bringing much home.
4. Lori Goodwin thanked the legislators for the improvements made on Prince Philip Drive.

- Howard Grief said teachers have not had a raise in three years and asked what the legislators will do to avoid jeopardizing the school system. Craig Rice spoke of his familiarity with the dedication of teachers and the money they spend on their students and promised when finances improve the school system will benefit. Nancy Navarro stated the school's cutting edge of best practices has been possible with investment in well compensated teachers and fine infrastructure.
- Theresa Kyne Robinson asked about the possibility of the state transferring teachers' pensions to the county level. Nancy Navarro said it was looming reality; Senator Roger Manno agreed and said it would add \$70 million to Montgomery County's budget, but we must preserve all that makes the county beautiful and successful.
- Joe Corbett asked how the largest delegation (Montgomery County) could not avoid the pension transfer, and Roger Manno stated the governor, speaker of the house, and senate president are all in favor of the pension shift.
- Troy Kimmel stated his concern with the busing option of the Fauquhar Middle School Modernization and said he had sent a petition supporting the land swap option signed by 2,000 people to the county office.
- Art Brodsky requested that the library renovation move faster and suggested a fence to prevent damage. Nancy Navarro did not think the pace could hasten, but the fence may be possible.
- When asked why the county council is paying a \$4 million subsidy to Costco, which hires temporary workers who make minimum wage, and Craig Rice said the agreement was made before he came to office and wanted to set a precedent of not walking away from a business deal. Nancy Navarro said the subsidy was actually for Westfield to attract Costco to the Wheaton Mall but thinks the money should have been spent elsewhere.
- Matt Zaborsky thanked both councilpersons for the June 3, 2011 letter they wrote to Neil Pedersen requesting the restoration of the second left turn lane onto Route 28 from northbound Georgia Avenue.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: James Song, MCPS Facility Manager – Farguhar Middle School Modernization - Update on Progress of Feasibility Study

Stating he would talk about the timeline, process, purpose of the feasibility, and modernization options, he said the study will be finished in June, 2011 and beginning in July, 2011 two years will be devoted to design. Allowing 24 months for construction, the completion date is August 2015 unless the onsite option is selected which will take an additional year.

The purpose of the feasibility study is to evaluate the existing conditions: the site, underground utilities, streambeds, trees, and then explore the possible alternatives. A constructability analysis that takes into account the phasing plan, safety, security, traffic, etc. is conducted on each option to determine its viability. Then cost modules, budget, and timeline are done before a recommendation is made to the superintendent. Then it goes to the school board and county council.

The Three Options for the Modernization:

- Bus students to the holding school**, Tilden Middle School, while demolishing and constructing a new school. All other schools have done this.
- On-site modernization** – Build a new school next to the school on the same property. This is typical for a high school because there is no holding school and more land on high school property. Mr. Song expressed concern for this option because the new school would be constructed 20 feet from the in-session school, and the ingress and egress are challenging.
- Land swap** – Build a new school on the adjacent property if that property becomes available to Park and Planning. The adjacent lot is 17 acres

Notes:

- The land swap option has more steps because Park and Planning is involved.
- The approval process will take several months, and the more time spent on options, the less time there will be for the design phase and therefore an impact on construction.

Mr. Song then answered questions.

- Matt Zaborsky asked if the school system had looked at the possibility of holding the students at a nearby private school, but Mr. Song stated that would involve the additional expense of leasing.
- Arnie Gordon stated that the title for the Perry High School had been transferred from the county, and he knows the county needs more schools. Mr. Song responded that the board of education was opposed to that exchange and he has testified before the county in favor of keeping schools. Last year school enrollment grew by 2,200 and is projected to grow by 10,000 by the next five years.
- Joe Corbett asked if there would be room for athletic facilities in the land swap option, and Mr. Song replied that they still needed to look at how much of the land is usable.

4. Sharon Dooley said the property owner adjacent to the lot is concerned about having the school so close to his property and Mr. Song said he could understand the owner's concern but had to look at the option from many perspectives.
5. Thomas Hyde Jr. stated the larger community was not made aware of the options that the beginning, but Mr. Song said that the original study focused on the onsite option but then all the landowners and homeowners associations were invited to the last meeting when other options were considered.
6. Jo Ann Morgan, the PTA president of Sherwood Elementary, said the community feasibility advisory committee had voted for the land swap option and asked why that option was not the school system's first choice. Mr. Song appreciates the committee's input, but since cost is important, the feasibility study must be completed and then make a recommendation to the board of education.
7. When a supporter of the land swap option stated that the middle schools that used Tilden M.S. were closer than Farquhar M.S. to that school, Mr. Song stated that was not true, and the purpose of the feasibility study is to use facts and not distorted information.
8. Christopher Kane said his children went to the Green Acres School next to Tilden for the quality of education, and the drive from Olney was dreadful.

James Song stated he appreciates the input from the community, but the council members clearly stated the budget crisis, so we need to consider the school system's challenge with the capital and operating budgets.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIASON REPORTS

President's Report: Matt Zaborsky thanked Councilmembers Navarro and Rice for presenting a budget update to us this evening. He also thanked Helene Rosenheim and the Olney Days Committee for the successful Olney Days event and Ellen Bogage, whom we are sorry to see leave, for her dedicated service as first vice-president. He then said he had been working with the transportation committee on the MD 97/MD 28 intersection issues and pointed out the June 12, 2011 Washington Post Dr. Gridlock article that included the MD 97/MD 28 intersection among the most congested in the county. Lastly he spoke briefly about land use decisions. The Norbeck Montessori School has received approval from the county planning board for its

rd
special exception request and forest conservation plan. A hearing was held on June 3 before the Hearing Examiner, and we are awaiting the report which we expect by the end of July. Next, if approved, the plan goes before the Board of Appeals which will make a final decision by the end of September. The Danshes property owners obtained a recommendation for approval from the Department of Environmental Protection for the sewer and water category changes they were seeking, but the department is deliberating whether to approve the application or refer it to the county council for further hearings. The planning board has voted to recommend approval under the administrative delegation process. Lastly, the Olney Assisted Living Partners is in the process of finalizing its plans for the proposed facility on Georgia Avenue and will soon meet with Cherrywood Homeowners Association to discuss their plans, including the number of trees to remove and site drainage concerns of the community. The builders will likely be filing plans with Park and Planning within the next 60 days.

Corresponding Secretary: Kathy Curtis stated the correspondence binder had a Gazette story about Farquhar Middle School, an article about the MD 97/MD 28 intersection, and the GOCA position on the Danshes property

Chamber of Commerce: Joe Buffington reminded us that this Thursday night the Chamber will present the business person of the year award.

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC): In response to Arnie Gordon's concern about the lack of light around the closed library, Art Brodsky said erecting a fence around the library would help keep the area safe. Jackie Benn asked if the OTCAC had requested from the county a left turn signal for eastbound MD 108 and Spartan Road, and Matt Zaborsky responded that the community was promised a study for that intersection and the MD 97 and Prince Philip Drive intersection. Lydia Rappolt shared she had recently seen two traffic study vehicles in Olney. Ms. Benn then stated that the Freeman Company had replaced trees with shrubs which do not sufficiently mask the noise created by delivery trucks in early morning

th
hours. Mr. Beard said the committee will next meet on July 26, and Howard Grief and Lydia Rappolt are applicants for two of the tree current openings on the committee.

Civic Federation: Arnie Gordon pointed out that school land is now being converted to parks. For example, the Kensington Jr. High property has become Rock Creek Hills Local Park (note - at one time this was a school that was closed and land given to MNCPPC). He said the one Civic Federation resolution is urging the state and county executives to develop a more transparent method for selecting sites for schools because of the concern that the county is losing parks and looking to replace

them with schools. Mr. Gordon said another federation resolution supports Council Bill 12-11 which prohibits county employees from soliciting donations from occupants of vehicles in the public right-of-way while "on the clock."

Membership Committee: Jodi Finkelstein said all but one homeowners association had paid.

Transportation Report: Paul Jarosinski said the correspondence book contains communication between Melinda Peters and him. Ms. Peters had written that the left turn lane on northbound MD 97 onto MD 28 could not be added back because of geometric constraints, but after his lengthy response, Ms. Peters had admitted that the left turning traffic backs up onto the thru lane. Mr. Jarosinski said the county executive had requested a copy of each of those letters and listed the upcoming work: surfacing on the MD 97/ICC bridge, striping on northbound MD 97, and landscaping on the ICC.

Treasurer: Ruth Laughner stated the balance is \$11,762.60. Arnie Gordon said the new membership deadline is July 2011.

New Business: Matt Zaborsky said that Ellen Bogage had resigned. Lori Wilen was elected to become first vice-president, Theresa Kyne Robinson was elected to become second vice-president. Lori Goodwin was elected to become Recording Secretary. Arnie Gordon moved to approve these nominations and Jackie Benn seconded the motion. All positions were elected by acclamation.

New Business: Farquhar Middle School Modernization

Arnie Gordon favors the land swap, but Jackie Benn has letters from homeowners associations that will be impacted by the school construction. Jodi Finkelstein read the following resolution:

Whereas....**GOCA Resolution on Modernization of Farquhar Middle School**

WHEREAS MCPS is scheduled to modernize FMS by demolishing the existing building and building a new facility and require removal of the students during that process and

WHEREAS some affected parents do not support busing their children to Tilden Middle School due to safety and other issues and some FMS neighbors prefer the Tilden option to others that have been expressed such as a parcel swap with the parcel between FMS and the Hyde property and

WHEREAS GOCA believes that the best resolution to this impasse is a mutually agreed upon solution arrived at by the most affected participants

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT GOCA does not at this time take any position on the FMS modernization proposals now under discussion. GOCA encourages all interested parties to continue to work toward a mutually agreeable solution that will benefit the children and families of Olney now and in future years

The majority voted to support the resolution but Arnie Gordon succeeded in tabling the resolution.

The meeting adjourned at 10: 15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Kyne Robinson, Recording Secretary

Acronym Notes:

1. FMS = Farquhar Middle School present or past parent and/or parent of child in Brooke Grove Elementary School or Sherwood Elementary School, advocate, etc.
2. SEROCA = Southeast Rural Olney Civic Association

People in attendance:

Sid Abeywickrama (FMS), Mohammed Saminl Alam (FMS), Iman Alemeh (Lake Hallowell), Claudette Ardizzone (Norwood Village), Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Jackie Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Stephen Blair (Anscroft), Thelma Bowes (Environ), Brad Branch (Olney Mill), Art Brodsky (Norbeck Meadows), Robin Bruekner (Ashley Manor), Joe Buffington (Olney Chamber of Commerce), James Castle (FMS), Andrea Cavanagh (FMS), Jenni Coppersmith (FMS), Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village), Judy Corcoran (FMS), Kathy Curtis (Lake Hallowell), Jeffrey Deutch (FMS), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Della A. Dorsey (Camelback Village), Angela Edwards (Ashton/FMS), Jack Exles (FMS), Mark Feldbush (Lake Hallowell/FMS), Miti Figueredo (Counselwoman Nancy Navarro's office), Lori Goodwin (Hallowell), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Shelley Gordon (FMS), Chuck Graefe (Southeast Rural Olney Civic Association), Michael Greenberg (Fair Hill Farm), Howard Greif (Norbeck Grove), Joe Griffin (FMS PTA pres.), Mary Gross (James Creek), Lynda Guernsey (James Creek/FMS), Henry Hailstock (Lake Hallowell), Wail Higazi (Lake Hallowell), Colleen Hogan (James Creek), Terri Hogan (Gazette), Hank Hyde (SEROCA), Thomas Hyde, Jr. (SEROCA), Thomas Hyde, Sr. (SEROCA), Kimberly Iannicello, Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Ann Johnson, Gail Kahan (FMS), Christopher Kane (FMS), Aleka Kapatou (Tanterra), Andrea Keller (Fair Hill Farm), Sefat-e Khuda (FMS), Felicia Kimmel (FMS),



P.O. Box 212 • Olney, Maryland • 20830

www.goca.org

Troy Kimmel (FMS), Michael Krakaur (FMS), Laura Lampshire (FMS), Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village), Patty Liszewski (FMS), Renee Lowden (FMS), Brian Lowe (Lake Hallowell), Deborah Ray Marhamati (Construction Project Engineer, Montgomery County Public Schools), Roger Manno (Maryland State Senator), Robert K. McCary (Cherrywood), Jennifer McKneely (FMS), Joann Mirgon (FMS), Elizabeth Miller (FMS), Bryan Natoli (FMS), Barry Newton (Ashton), Stacey Noland (Hallowell), Stephanie Noland (Hallowell), Kate Olsen (James Creek), Alyce Ortuzar (Hallowell), Rachel Packer (Lake Hallowell), Joe Pasternak (FMS), Lori Post (FMS), Cheryl Potyk (FMS), Susan Ramsey (FMS/James Creek), Lydia Rappolt (Camelback Village), Barbara Ray (Brookeville), Theresa Kyne Robinson (Olney Oaks), Michael Ronan (FMS), Nancy Rohrman (FMS), Anne Rood (FMS), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands of Olney), Selena Mendy Singleton (Office of Congressional Representative Donna Edwards), Rebecca Smondrowski (Office of State Senator Roger Manno), Sharon St. Pierre (Office of Montgomery County Councilmember Craig Rice), Priyam Talukder (FMS), John Webster (Manor Oaks), Matt Weiss (Office of Delegate Bonnie Cullison), Brant West (Ashton Peserve/FMS), Michael Whelen (Christie Estates), Lori Wilen (Cherrywood), Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows)