

MINUTES
July 12, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

President Matt Zaborsky called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. President Zaborsky announced that the order of the agenda would be changed to hear the special presentations directly following the call to order, and corrected the notice of the next meeting to be September 13, 2011. Arnie Gordon moved to approve the agenda, with corrections, and Bob Beard seconded, and the agenda was approved unanimously.

Arnie Gordon then moved to approve the June minutes, with seconding by Lydia Rappolt. The minutes were corrected on Page 4 in last sentence of the minutes to state, “Arnie moved to table the motion, and was duly seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by all in attendance.” The June minutes, as corrected, were unanimously approved.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Danshes Property

Rebecca Walker, attorney with Miles and Stockbridge, P.C., updated GOCA on the proposed development of the Danshes Property located on the eastern side of Georgia Avenue south of the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Station. She was joined by Les Powell, engineer with Charles P. Johnson Assoc., Bo Cook of HH Hunt in Blacksburg, VA, and Joel Danshes the property owner. The HH Hunt group plans to develop the 38 acre property into an assisted living community similar to properties highlighted at their website www.springharborliving.com. Construction is planned where the property meets Georgia Avenue, with a forested area in the southern part of the plat to remain undeveloped. The area is zoned RNC, and the developers have requested a sewer change which has already been reviewed by Montgomery County and is currently under 90-day review by the State Department of the Environment. The developers will then submit subdivision and site plans to the M-NCPPC, seeking special exceptions under the life care facility ordinance. A transportation study will be required, as well as stormwater management planning. President Matt Zaborsky noted that GOCA voted to reject water/sewer change, consistent with the Olney Master Plan recommendation that the property not be included in the public sewer service envelope since it cannot be served through gravity. The MC Planning Board voted in favor of the change.

Questions regarding the scope and need for the project were asked by Arnie Gordon, Jackie Benn, Sharon Dooley, and Ed Weisel. The presenters responded that the secure facility would have privately-funded monthly leases for all 100 units (40 Alzheimer units and 60 assisted living units) operated by 50 staff members. Security would be ensured by fencing, an alarm system and possibly security bracelets. Developers estimate that Medicaid reimbursements would not cover the room costs. Development of elderly housing is highlighted in the master plan. Developers may conduct a noise study due to the proximity of the fire station and will research vehicles for forest conservation. Howard Greif noted that there isn't enough elderly housing in the area and Kathleen Donedeo mentioned that adult children may opt to bring aging parents to elder care facilities in Olney. Paula Kahla stated that these centers bring money to Olney businesses. Joel Danshes stated that he was happy to sell his property to HH Hunt, wishing such a facility existed for an elderly relative, and rejecting proposals from residential developers and a car dealer.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: OTCAC Design Review Guidelines

Bob Beard, Chairman of the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC), presented the Committee's new Design Review Guidelines. The guidelines provide recommended options for the

aesthetics of the Olney Town Center (OTC) as envisioned by the OTCAC. Bob introduced OTCAC members Paula Kahla, Helene Rosenheim and Kathleen Donedeo, applicants Lydia Rappolt, Howard Grief and announced applicant Danny Benn (not in attendance).

The guidelines provide an overview of the OTCAC, the general plans for the mixed use zone in the town center and the semi-rural development concept for Olney. The guidelines are divided into the following subheadings:

1. Architectural Design – establishes the overall look, colors, and materials
2. Streetscape Design – provides consistency for sidewalks, landscaping, and crossings
3. Parking – suggests lighting, landscaping and screening to enhance the low- profile nature of the OTC for consistency and security
4. Landscaping – provides more detail regarding green spaces
5. Signs – encourages uniformity in signage and establish ideas for future signs
6. Screening – suggests screening for service and utility areas

Sharon Dooley noted that Safeway would provide parking behind the store, and Paula Kahla suggested businesses may research rooftop parking. Howard Greif noted that the OTCAC is advisory and that development requires planning board approval unless redevelopment encompasses less than a 10% change. Barbara Barry inquired about the suggested traffic circle in the guidelines, which Bob stated was just an idea. Matt Zaborsky asked if the Olney Town Center was envisioned as a mixed use area like the Kentlands, to which Bob said yes. Bob further described the mixed use area as a combination of retail and/or small businesses with residences above. Laura Lampshire noted that citizens could call Montgomery County if businesses violate the county noise ordinance. Bob thanked GOCA for inviting OTCAC to share table space at the National Night Out event in August, and stated that the public could log onto www.olneytowncenter.org for more information or to submit comments regarding on the guidelines.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Matt Zaborsky announced a community coffee with representatives of local elected officials and the Mid-County Regional Services Center would be held on Thursday, July 14th at the Starbucks near Roots. He also announced that National Night Out festivities would be held on Aug 2nd from 5-8pm on the Montgomery General Hospital (MGH) grounds and GOCA would staff a table. Paula Kahla thanked the community for supporting the Olney Satellite Police Station and was glad for its reinstatement in the County budget.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

a. President's Report

Matt Zaborsky announced that due to the resignation of Ellen Bogage, Lori Wilen has been elected First Vice President, Theresa Robinson has been elected Second Vice President, and Lori Goodwin has been elected Recording Secretary. He also announced that Victoria Springs HOA had not paid their dues for 2011, but Treasurer Ruth Laughner indicated that Victoria Springs HOA did pay their dues in December of 2010.

Matt noted that the GOCA Board was monitoring many issues including the Routes 97/28 intersection, the Danshes property, the Norbeck Montessori school relocation and traffic issues concerning Route 108. He stated that the MC Planning Board has scheduled a public hearing for July 28, 2011 regarding the proposed relocation of the Wheaton Baptist Church to Emory Church Rd. The planned church would occupy 48,000 square feet of the 15 acre lot.

b. Correspondence Report

Kathy Curtis noted that the GOCA binder includes a few letters regarding the Farquhar Middle School modernization, the Route 97/28 intersection and the ICC.

c. Chamber of Commerce Report

Joe Buffington announced the National Night Out would be on August 2, 2011 at MGH. He announced the Olney Chamber of Commerce 2011 award recipients: Shannon Gorman received the Clyde Undglesbee President's Award, Longwood Community Center and its director, Sophie Randolph, were recognized with the Partners in Business Award, and Elisabeth Deal, Director of the Olney Boys and Girls Club, received the Business Person of the Year Award.

d. Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

Bob Beard noted that in addition to the guidelines presented to GOCA, the OTCAC is monitoring the FSP-Olney Assisted Living Facility development east of Olney Chiropractic. The company is creating a Community Liaison Committee with nearby residents. This is the former Sunrise property and GOCA members suggested they be asked to share their redevelopment plans with the committee.

Bob requested GOCA's support for a letter to Mr. Art Holmes, Director of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, suggesting the following uses for the Safeway traffic mitigation payment: a crosswalk across Spartan Road between Giant and Safeway; striping from Georgia Avenue to Appomattox, installation of steps and a walking path behind the Olney Library to behind Olney Grill, and a sidewalk from Morningwood Drive to Bantry Way. Though Jackie Benn asked if the money could be used to improve the Georgia Avenue and Route 108 intersection, it cannot since MD State Highway regulates this intersection. Bob noted that a representative from MD State Highway is invited to address the OTCAC at their next meeting on July 26, 2011 in the Remax Building. Bob moved for GOCA to endorse the OTCAC letter, and Arnie Gordon seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

e. Civic Federation Report

Arnie Gordon did not have a report from the civic federation, but noted that the dues are now due.

f. Membership Report

Matt Zaborsky reported on behalf of Jodi Finkelstein that North Creek and Sycamore Acres have not paid dues.

g. Transportation Report

Ed Weisel presented the following report on behalf of Chairman Paul Jarosinski. Ed stated that Paul received an email from Carla Julian stating the following ICC projects would begin: the "Welcome to Olney" sign would be placed back on Georgia Avenue, electrical work would be done on the 97 bridge, and foliage would be trimmed on Thistlebridge Dr. Ed noted that a letter was sent from Neil Peterson to County Executive Ike Leggett stating that there were no plans to change the Routes 97/28 intersection. In reply, Paul Jarosinski and Roy Peck wrote to request reinstatement of the previous lane assignments to northbound Georgia Avenue (double left turn lane and 2 northbound through lanes). Ed noted that the backed-up traffic turning left from Georgia Avenue is blocking through traffic travelling north during the p.m. rush. Matt Zaborsky noted that the Transportation Committee should have a formal committee meeting soon. He also suggested a sign should be installed on northbound Georgia Avenue indicating that two left lanes turn to enter onto the ICC.

h. Treasurers Report

Ruth Laughner announced that the current bank balance is \$15,465.16. The \$8,000 Olney Days projection was exceeded due to higher fees from Montgomery County such as park fees and fire marshal fees. The total \$11,000 was paid and offset by donations from Fletchers, Safeway, MGH, Graeves, and several GOCA members. Helene Roseheim will follow up regarding the anticipated MGH donation and Sharon Dooley stated Olney Days was not a net loss to GOCA.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Arnie Gordon moved and Ed Weisel seconded to untable the motion regarding the Farquhar Middle School (FMS) modernization. Arnie deferred to Andrea Keller, from Fair Hill Farm. Andrea submitted documents stating support for the FMS modernization from HOAs, school PTAs, and elected officials. Andrea Keller introduced the following resolution, seconded by Ed Weisel:

WHEREAS the Greater Olney Civic Association's mission is to study, plan, coordinate and promote the overall civic, economic, ecological and cultural welfare of the community within the Olney Master Plan area,

WHEREAS Farquhar Middle School is scheduled for modernization beginning in June 2013, and an option developed by Montgomery County Schools would require busing all students to the Tilden Holding Center in Bethesda for two years,

WHEREAS the Farquhar school district extends up New Hampshire Avenue all the way to Sunshine, MD – a 20 mile drive to Tilden, and Montgomery County Public Schools own estimate of the bus ride length is 1 hour and 10 minutes each way,

WHEREAS inclement weather and Base Realignment and Closure traffic increases at the Bethesda Naval Hospital could further increase student transit times,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT GOCA opposes a modernization option for Farquhar Middle School that would have students bused to the Tilden Holding Center for two years.

Jackie Benn noted that of the endorsements, the Townes, Fair Hill Farm and Environ are all part of Environ. Bob Beard noted that the bus length estimate in the resolution does not state “from the farthest point” of the school district. Sharon Dooley stated that Bethesda Naval Hospital is 4 miles away from the Tilden Holding Center. Chuck Graefe said that SEROCA reviewed the proposal, found that the land swap is not consistent with the Olney Master Plan, found topography problems with the area would inhibit sewage flow, and stated SEROCA committee voted to uphold the master plan and reject the land swap option. Lori Goodwin stated that Hallowell HOA reviewed the issue and voted against the land swap option. Hank Hyde stated that his family had lived adjacent to the proposed park land for 106 years and testified to the sewage concern.

Arnie Gordon noted that the resolution does not reference the land swap. Lori Wilen stated that she couldn't vote on a resolution on busing if it meant choosing the land swap as one of the alternate options. Kathy Curtis noted that the tabled resolution mentioned the land swap and asked if the parents were open to all options which didn't bus to Tilden Holding Center. The parents in the audience asked if delegates had to vote in accordance with their respective HOAs, noting that Lake Hallowell and James Creek HOAs endorsed the land swap. Matt Zaborsky noted that he would look into GOCA's customs regarding how officers should vote on resolutions. Howard Greif noted that one option would allow the school to be built on site behind the existing school. The audience noted that the onsite option would be 3 stories, would cost more, and would not allow use of the playing fields.

Arnie Gordon commented that busing the children for such a long time is not preferable. He noted that when Cashell was rebuilt, the children attended a school much closer to Olney. He stated that the County should plan better and refuse to sell off school buildings such as the former Peary HS. Lori Wilen asked if the former Mark Twain school (now the Blair Ewing Center) could be used for FMS students; another member suggested the Washington Christian Academy building could be used. Kathy Curtis asked if the resolution could be modified to request all options be reopened and reevaluated. Matt Zaborsky commented that an MCPS letter states the Facility Advisory Committee report will be available on July 15, 2011 and that the land swap would only be viable if M-NCPPC agrees to it. Lori Wilen noted that the new resolution concerns busing but the tabled resolution from last month sought support for the land swap. Jackie Benn suggested the resolution language be improved to be in favor of either the land

swap or the onsite option. Ed Weisel suggested maybe the Board of Education had not reviewed all possible options yet regarding the FMS modernization.

Meg Pease-Fye noted that SEROCA had developed a working group on the topic. Hank Hyde stated that the land swap would swap the current 20 acre school property for only a 17 acre property with 2 streambeds in the area. He further stated his support for the OMP, which took 8 years to complete and no mention of a potential land swap during that time. Laura Lampshire said GOCA's mission was fight for schools. Delegates noted that GOCA does not normally discuss education issues, but had commented on the Sherwood HS and ES additions. Arnie noted that some shelved plans for the OTC involved Olney ES as a town center location. Anne Rood noted that many options discussed by GOCA had been rejected already by MCPS. Delegate Luedtke stated that a 2 hour bus ride is not good for children.

In view of the concerns expressed regarding the language of the resolution, Matt Zaborsky suggested that the bottom of the resolution be retained. The following friendly amendment was substituted by Andrea:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT GOCA supports the PTA's position that busing FMS students to the Tilden Holding Center for two years would not be in the best interest of the students.

Lori Goodwin commented that the approved PTA position did not discuss busing and instead was a position in favor of the land swap. On the vote the yeas were 11, the nays were 5; the motion passed. Jackie Benn withdrew the tabled motion from last month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Matt Zaborsky announced that since GOCA does not formally meet in August, GOCA is hosting a social for GOCA delegates and spouses/significant others on August 9, 2011 at Norbeck Grove. The next GOCA meeting will be on Tuesday, September 13, 2011. Matt Zaborsky moved and was duly seconded to adjourn at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Goodwin, Recording Secretary

ATTENDEES

GOCA Delegates

Barbara Barry (Perspective Woods), Bob Beard (Homeland Village), Jackie Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Kathy Curtis (Lake Hollowell), Sharon Dooley (James Creek), Jodi Finkelstein (Hallowell), Lori Goodwin (Hallowell), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Chuck Graefe (Southeast Rural Olney Civic Association), Howard Greif (Norbeck Grove), Andrea Keller (alternate, Fair Hill Farm), Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village), Lydia Rappolt (Camelback Village), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands of Olney), Ann Marie Saporito (James Creek), Louis Saporito (James Creek), Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Lori Wilen (Cherrywood), Matt Zaborsky (Norbeck Meadows)

Elected Officials and Staff

Eric Luedtke (Maryland State Delegate), Rebecca Smondrowski (Office of State Senator Roger Manno), Matt Weiss (Office of Delegate Bonnie Cullison),

Invited Guests

Joe Buffington (Olney Chamber of Commerce), Bo Cook (HH Hunt), Joel Danshes (HH Hunt), Kathleen Donedeo (Hallowell, OTCAC), Terri Hogan (Gazette), Paula Kahla (Sandy Spring), Les Powell (Charles P. Johnson Assoc.), Rebecca Walker (Miles and Stockbridge, P.C.)

Public

Angela Edwards (Ashton), Hank Hyde (SEROCA), Laura Lampshire, Meg Pease-Fye (SEROCA), Anne Rood