

Minutes  
March 13, 2012

### CALL TO ORDER

President Barbara Falcigno called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Delegates then introduced themselves.

Arnie Gordon moved to approve the agenda, and Kathy Curtis seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved. Arnie Gordon moved to approve the corrected February 14, 2012 minutes, and Kathy Curtis seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Arnie Gordon stated that focus groups are being formed concerning the renewal of Comcast's cable franchise. The renewal of the franchise agreement will have a term of 15 yrs. Civic groups are invited to discuss this issue in a public forum at the Community Media Building, located at 7564 Standish Place, Rockville, MD, on Wednesday, March 21, 2012 from 3-5pm.

Barbara Falcigno reminded everyone that Primary Election Day is April 3, 2012. Early vote is also available online at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov). There will be a Career Day at Rosa Parks Middle School on May 11, 2012 from 8-noon. Volunteers to speak with students on their professions are needed. Lt. Mark Yamada, 4<sup>th</sup> District Deputy Commander, arrested a subject involved in a rash of burglaries in the Olney-Ashton area. A press release will be forthcoming.

Helene Rosenheim announced that Olney Days will be on May 18<sup>th</sup> through May 20<sup>th</sup>. The next planning meeting will be on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The new event to replace "The Mr. and Ms. Olney Contest" will be "The Olney Idol Show" at the Olney Theatre, a localized version of "American Idol." For more information or to volunteer, contact Helene Rosenheim at the GOCA.org website.

### SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- 1) **Rebecca Walker from Miles & Stockbridge, Les Powell from Charles P. Johnson Associates, and Bo Cook from HHHunt Company discussed updates to their proposed Spring Arbor Project on the Danshes property on Georgia Avenue, north of the Sandy Spring firestation.**

Rebecca Walker was the first to speak and dispersed preliminary plans for the Danshes property for GOCA to review. However, those plans were not final. A joint venture between the Danshes family and HHHunt Company, the plan details the building of a private assisted living facility and a specialty Alzheimer's care facility on site on the Danshes property. The building will be 230 ft. from Georgia Avenue, breaking into three units. The front portion, near Georgia Avenue, will house the assisted living facility and the two smaller back components will be cottages to house those with Alzheimer's disease.

There will be 92 units in the entire facility, housing 125 residents for single and married couples. Being in an RNC zone, the project requires a special exception to build the facility, which involves 3 phases. The first phase is the special exception to build the facility; the second phase is a preliminary plan; and the last phase is a site plan. Currently, the project is in the first phase of the process.

With regard to the land itself, in July 2011 a sewer category change was approved for the property along Georgia Avenue. Further, the rear of the property is largely forested. As such, the project plans to retain 80% of the forested areas and proposes to have a “forest conservation bank” for the unused forest land. Specifically, when a developer has a large amount of existing on-site forest land, there is a requirement that he/she preserve some of that forest land while developing that property. At times, a developer cannot meet this criterion. Therefore, that developer can purchase “credits” from a “forest conservation bank” to preserve that area’s forest land, which is recorded and subject to review.

From an operational standpoint, the facility is a one-story building, designed with a residential façade to blend with the area. Those in need of an assisted living home would rent their unit within the facility as a tenant, bringing with them their own personal belongings. Further, all needs are taken care of on-site as an all-inclusive community, limiting the impact on the surrounding areas. Shuttle buses will be offered to take residents to and from shopping areas and points of interest. Finally, there is no parking in the front portion of the building.

There has been fencing and enclosures proposed in the outdoor areas as operation features of the site for the areas around the specialty care cottages for safety. In addition, there has been fencing proposed for the forested areas.

For more information, go to [www.springarborliving.com](http://www.springarborliving.com) to learn more about the facilities.

**2) John Salzberg from the Sandy Springs Civic Association on the bike path from Route 108 to Route 192 (Norwood Road).**

As way of introduction and historical background, John Salzberg explained that the 1998 Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan recommended pedestrian paths and bikeways “to enhance mobility for pedestrians and bicyclists by providing a network that links open space, parks, village centers, and other community destinations in the regional network.” In 2010, the Sandy Spring Civic Association further recommended this shared-use path for cyclist and pedestrians. At this point, there is a bikeway on two-thirds of Norwood Road and two-thirds of Dr. Bird Road, as well as a small bike path on Sandy Spring Road. As such, much of the bike path has been built.

Councilwoman Navarro, in her July 2011 letter to the County Executive, stated that that the Sandy Springs Civic Association’s bike path plan was consistent with the objectives of the Master Plan and the plan would improve the safety and livability of the area, helping to revitalize the Sandy Spring Town Center and business district. In addition, District 14’s State Delegation wrote to the head of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, specifying that this plan for shared-use paths was consistent with the 1998 Master Plan and was needed for safer pedestrian and bicycle routes.

Mr. Salzberg discussed the advantage of a shared-use path. The first issue was safety in that the path would enable bicyclers and pedestrians to reach their destinations without the risk of being hit by an automobile, which is particularly evident on Dr. Bird Road and Route 108.

The County Executive recommended to the County Council that a bike-way study be done in fiscal year 2017 and authorize the Department of Transportation to conduct a Facility Planning Phase 1 Study to determine the costs and benefits of the shared-use path. However, the Transportation Subcommittee of the County Council has assessed the cost of a shared-use path at around one million dollars. Further still, the Transportation Subcommittee recently issued a budget report, considered by the County Council, where no new projects for bike paths were included and the Sandy Springs Civic Association seeks GOCA’s endorsement for this project.

The concept design of the bike path, or the shared-use path, goes from Dr. Bird Road onto Sandy Spring/Olney Road to Norwood Road, forming a triangle. There would be a barrier between the bike path itself and the roadway.

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

### **a. President's Report**

There are many committees within GOCA. GOCA needs help with staffing these committees. Volunteers are sorely needed. A Parliamentarian is needed with knowledge of Robert's Rules.

### **b. Correspondence Report**

Howard Greif stated the following was in the GOCA correspondence binder: primarily documents regarding the First Baptist Church of Wheaton, planning Board of Appeal documents for Trotter's Glen, correspondence on the Mill Stream and the like.

### **c. Chamber of Commerce Report**

Joe Buffington stated that the Chamber of Commerce scholarship applications deadline is April 20. To apply for the scholarship go to [www.olneymd.org](http://www.olneymd.org) for applications. The Chamber of Commerce Athena Awards nomination deadline has passed. The Tea is on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at 2:00.

### **d. Olney Town Center Advisory Committee**

Helene Rosenheim said that the opening of the new Safeway went well. OTAC's next meeting will be March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the REMAX building. OTAC is still working on the pedestrian crosswalk on Spartan Road between Giant and Safeway. The Committee has invited Barry Arronrich, a Special Assistant in the Department of Transportation for discussion. The new urgent care facility has put a request for new signage that exceeds the sign ordinances. A hearing will be held March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

### **e. Civic Federation Report**

Arnie Gordon reported that the Civic Federation supports Council approval of zoning texts amendment of 1201 and 1202 if all large combination retail stores in the legislation (including the new Wal-mart proposals) required special exception approval regardless of location. Two local delegates, Ann Kaiser and Eric Lutke, have introduced HB 1412, an emergency bill that sets a property tax rate that is higher than that set by the County Charter under specified circumstances for a specified purpose. The Civic Federation unanimously voted to notify its disapproval of this bill to the state government as it usurps County governing authority. The County Executive will issue the operating budget on March 20, 2012. The County Council will hold hearings on the budget during April and May. Approval of the operating budget will be on May 17, 2012. The Board of Education action to approve the budget is on June 14, 2012.

### **f. Membership Report**

John Webster reported that, based on 2012 registrations, 10 HOAs have not registered out of 35.

### **g. Transportation Report**

Paul Jarosinski reported that The Transportation Committee currently consists of Paul Jarosinski, Roy Peck, Jim Essemore, Lee Loftus, Arnie Gordon, and Matt Zaborsky. With regard to Maryland's proposal for sales tax increase on gasoline, delegates have submitted an exemption for large purchases. The proposal was not submitted to the legislature for review until February 15, 2012. HB 1302 and SB 971 set the cap at a 15% per rate. In other words, the sales tax on gas can increase 15% per year before a cap is instituted. The gas tax money is restricted to supplant Maryland's transportation fund. HB 23 prohibits the state from taking money from a dedicated fund to transfer to general funds. Ben Kramer is a sponsor of this bill. HB 275 and SB 210 allows a subtraction modification of up to \$500 for individuals under the Maryland income tax for tolls paid through the EZ Pass Program.

Please report potholes at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/311](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/311). There is a link to report potholes at this site. Emory Lane repaving will begin on March 19, 2012. Georgia Avenue (northbound and southbound) repaving is in progress and should be completed by the end of June. The Transportation Committee will meet with Darrel Mobley on March 28, 2012. State reassessment of Route 97 and Route 28 will begin in the first week of April. Despite a 1.4 million dollar advertising program, the ICC's numbers continue to fall, according to an article in the Sentinel. According to John Webster, there has been a proposal by the State for Brookville Preserve Expansion to have a new entry onto Georgia Avenue for 10 new townhouses, south of Owens Road. A hearing will be held on March 13 at Park & Planning. A representative of Manor Oaks will be present at the forum. According to Sharon Dooley, Metro wants to do an impact study on ridership for those who travel the bus routes on Georgia Avenue. Metro is seeking input from bus travelers. A hearing will be held on Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 7:30 in Wheaton. OTAC is reviewing the speeding issue on Spartan Road at the Fair Hill crosswalk.

#### **h. Treasurers Report**

Ruth Laughner announced that the current bank balance is \$15,716.38. Ruth has received \$1550.00 in donations for Olney Days (May 18-20, 2012) in memory of Ron Berger. Safeway has pledged \$2000 for Olney Days.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Update on First Baptist Church of Wheaton**

Barbara Falcigno gave a brief history of the issue and updated delegates on the status of the First Wheaton Baptist Church development proposed on Emory Church Road. SEROCA will work with Attorney Michele Rosenberg to take the lead in pursuing legal action to reevaluate the PIF policy in this instance. GOCA, as a plaintiff, has retained Attorney Dave Brown to file an amicus brief and present oral arguments to help SEROCA on GOCA's behalf.

*Motion to empower the GOCA Officers Committee to expend an additional \$3000 in legal costs on the issue of the sewer category change on the Dougherty property. Moved by Arnie Gordon and seconded by Ed Weisell. Motion passed.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The discussion centered on the bike way funds from the federal government that have been transferred to general funds by Maryland. This topic will be discussed further under Unfinished Business in the next meeting.

HOAs will consult with their members on the Spring Arbor property's special exception. Further, some members were disturbed by influence of local developers and the loss of forest land through the forest conservation bank. The issue will be discussed as Old Business in the next meeting.

More volunteers are needed for the committees of GOCA (Legislation, Special Exceptions, Land Use, County Issues, Zoning, etc.). These volunteers will become "min-experts" on a subject once joining the committees.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next GOCA meeting will be on Tuesday, April 10, 2012.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Arnie Gordon made a motion to adjourn, seconded Kathy Curtis by at 9:03 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark K. Hill, Recording Secretary

GOCA Executive Board

Barbara Barry (Perspective Woods), Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Jackie Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village), Kathy Curtis (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Lake Hallowell), Barbara Falcigno (President, Olney Oaks), Jodi Finkelstein (Hallowell), Lori Goodwin (Hallowell), Arnie Gordon (NMCA), Chuck Graefe (SEROCA), Mark Hill (Recording Secretary, Camelback Village), Meg Pease-Fye (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, SEROCA), Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Jeff Kahan (Christie Estates), Andrea Keller (Fair Hill Farm), Howard Grief (Corresponding Secretary, Norbeck Grove), Caroline Knight (Olney Oaks), Ruth Laughner (Treasurer, Williamsburg Village), Lydia Rappolt (Camelback Village), Anne Rood (Lake Hallowell), Helene Rosenheim (past President, Highlands), Jim Smith (Oatland Farm), Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood), Dennis Twombly (Olney Mill), John Webster (Executive Vice President, Manor Oaks), Lori Wilen (Cherrywood), Troy Kimmel (Lake Hallowell), L.J Saporito (James Creek), Greg Intoccia (Ashley Hollow), Aleka Kapaton (Tanterra), Vicky Acito (Olney Square), Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres)

Elected Officials and Staff

Bonnie Cullison (District 19 State Delegate), Ira Unger

Invited Guests

Rebecca Walker (Miles & Stockbridge), Les Powell (Charles P. Johnson Associates), Bo Cook (HHHunt Company), Terri Hogan (Gazette)

Public

Art Brodsky (Cherrywood), Tom Callahan (Norbeck Grove), Katherine Farquhar (Brookeville Town Commissioner), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Barbara Ray (Brookville), Della Dorsey (Camelback Village), Anna Rosario (Cherrywood), Ann Marie Saporito (James Creek), Sharon Dooley (past President, James Creek), John Salzberg (SSCA), Bess Teller (Shaare Tefila), Jack Teller (Brookeville), Louis Wilen (Cherrywood), Joe Fitsch (Highlands)