



GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

2023-6-13 Representatives Meeting

- Minutes -

The 2023-6-13 Representatives Meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) was held online via Zoom and called to order at 7:30PM EST by President Helene Rosenheim, with Recording Secretary John Seng present. A quorum was present. All participants were introduced. Those attending:

Officers

- Helene Rosenheim, President (Highlands of Olney)
- Irina Norell, Executive Vice President (Norbeck Meadows) (Transportation Committee)
- Curtis Chappell, First Vice President (Olney Square)
- Jeff Duce, Treasurer (Norbeck Grove)
- Jamie Goad, Corresponding Secretary (Norbeck Meadows)
- John Seng, Recording Secretary (Transportation Committee) (Brooke Manor Estates)

Members

- Mindy Badin (Olney Mill) (Transportation Committee)
- Judy Broseker (Brookeville Knolls)
- Mike Dickerson (Olney Oaks)
- Aleka Kapatou (Tanterra)

- Lee Kidd (Cherrywood)
- Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres)
- Juris Mohseni (Village of James Creek)
- Marlene Saulsbury (Forest Crossing)
- Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood)
- Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows)

Guests

- Montgomery County Council President Evan Glass
- Montgomery County Councilmember Dawn Luedtke, Dist. 7
- Aaron Kraut (Chief of Staff, Montgomery County Councilmember Dawn Luedtke)
- Ira Ungar (representing MD. Del. Bonnie Cullison, District 19)
- Hope Klein (Council President Glass staff member) (Brookeville Knolls resident)

Approval of Agenda for June 13, 2023 Meeting

The agenda changed to table the discussion of Bill 12-23, the Safety and Traffic Equity in Policing (STEP) Act with lead sponsor Montgomery County Councilmember At-Large Will Jawando until July GOCA meeting. No other changes to agenda. The agenda was approved as edited.

Approval of Minutes from May 9, 2023

No additions or corrections to the minutes. John Seng raised the need to obtain Sen. Craig Zucker's team presentation deck file to link to the posted minutes. The minutes were approved, unanimously, as presented. The presentation will be linked when available.

Announcements

Curtis Chappell mentioned a topic discussed on the most recent GOCA officers call describing a potential August social and volunteer recruitment event at the Lone Oak Farm Brewery. Helene discussed the idea to recruit new volunteers via the social event. The GOCA officers will continue to discuss and further refine the event plans.

Guest Speaker - Montgomery County Council President Evan Glass Presentation on Proposed Montgomery County Safe Streets Legislation

Curtis Chappell introduced Mr. Glass.

Mr. Glass described the need for and provisions of Bill 11-23, Motor Vehicles and Traffic – Traffic Signals, Devices, and Automated Enforcement Plan (The Safe Streets Act of 2023) that he is sponsoring along with co-sponsor District 7 Councilmember Dawn Luedtke (and other Council members).

He described his background of civic activism as engaging him in politics; and his experience walking down along East-West Highway in Silver Spring. He met with neighbors to take action and get more crosswalks installed.

He currently chairs the Council's Transportation and Environment Committee. He cited 258 pedestrians and bicyclists hit on Montgomery County roads, with 6 people killed thus far in 2023.

The Bill does four things:

1. Creates safer intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists. Increases time-to-cross intervals at certain intersections in downtown areas. Central Olney will be covered.
2. Bans turning right on red at problematic intersections.
3. Requires the County Executive to create a new plan for traffic enforcement. Supports automated enforcement that would require no police officers and is "colorblind" as to a person's ethnicity.
4. Requires County Department of Transportation to conduct an infrastructure review anytime a student is hit by a vehicle while walking to or from school. His phone "pings" and "dings" at all hours, and the worst message is when a child has been hit.

Curtis Chappell asked Mr. Glass about future provisions for parks, libraries, recreation centers and transportation hubs. Mr. Glass responded that he believes we need to do this everywhere. That the County has a lot of money for road improvement in a variety of places. He wants to focus first on schools as a priority.

They are planning to change the language in the Bill to refer to anyone walking within a school zone.

Councilmember Dawn Luedtke commented that she will prioritize revising the language of the Bill to include crosswalks.

Curtis relayed other questions relating to the extent of support from other stakeholders. Ms. Luedtke commented that most (government) officials support the Bill. Mr. Glass also cited the Bill's co-sponsors, including Ms. Luedtke and most of the County Council as well as the County Executive and Department of Transportation.

A question was asked about Montgomery County looking more closely at drivers taking shortcuts through residential communities.

Mr. Glass spoke about the pros and cons of speed humps and road diets to narrow the scope of the roads. Sidewalks are important, but can be controversial. However, if we want to get kids off the road, then give them sidewalks.

Another question related to the enforcement of violators with outstanding citations. Ms. Luedtke feels that automated enforcement is highly effective, but that sometimes the riders in violation do not own the vehicles nor incur the fines that registered vehicle owners receive.

Question about roadway markings and how visible they will be. Mr. Glass commented that the no-right-turn-on-red requirements will be placed in downtown and town center areas. He will follow-up with additional information.

John Seng asked Mr. Glass a question about support that he could provide to "lobby" for speed cameras on the ICC. Mr. Glass replied that he and others lobbied in Annapolis to give the County more authority to install speed cameras within the County. There is some pushback among the Montgomery County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, but "we need to do this." There's a disconnect with other delegations that have other opinions. He encouraged Olney community members to reach out to the new chair of the Maryland General Assembly Environment and Transportation Committee, Marc Korman.

Ed Weisel raised what he described as a contentious issue from previous years involving sidewalks installation and that snow removal requirements should be considered.

Mindy Badin asked about the State Department of Transportation and whether there has been cooperation. Mr. Glass credited former Gov. Hogan with bringing in State Highway Administration leadership that understood that parts of Montgomery County should not be treated the same as parts of Cecil County or Frederick County and more.

Ms. Luedtke cited construction worksite safety issues now, including examples of drivers who are throwing projectiles at construction workers: "We have a lot of work to do."

Helene asked whether Mr. Glass had coordinated with the Park and Planning Commission Pedestrian Master Plan group. He replied they incorporated all aspects of his legislation in the Plan. Will be taking up all aspects of the legislation in the Master Plan.

The timetable for the Bill is June 29, and then it goes to the full Council. The Department of Transportation will manage the timetable and locations.

Mr. Glass highlighted that 3 percent of County roads account for 41 percent of crashes.

Worst routes for both State and County roads:

- Germantown
- Rockville
- Gaithersburg
- Wheaton

Most dangerous State roads

- New Hampshire Avenue
- Georgia Avenue
- Germantown Road
- University Boulevard

Most dangerous County roads:

- East Gude Drive
- Snouffer School Road
- Shady Grove Road
- Randolph Road

Mr. Glass requested that Olney residents should please share news of the Bill. He believes it's going to pass, but still appreciates the support.

8:40 pm Reports

Treasurer's Report Jeff Duce, Treasurer

Not much to report this month. Did rent the banner space for a week.

Transportation Committee - John Seng, Chair

- Mindy Badin and John attended a June 3 Montgomery County Families for Safe Streets rally in Rockville Town Center.
 - Mindy spoke at the event. Council President Evan Glass and Councilmember Dawn Luedtke and other elected officials attended. Co-sponsored by Action Committee for Transit and Washington Area Bicyclists Association.
 - MoCo360 reported on the event..
- John read the following email: *This is Nima Upadhyay from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. I am reaching out to you to inform you about the pedestrian safety improvements we are proposing at three different intersections along Hines Road. These safety recommendations were identified by the Cashell Elementary School, Safe Route to School Study (SRTS) completed in 2018. The SRTS study reviews the walking condition of students within one (1) mile of the school and recommends safety improvements to promote walking and bicycling to school. To learn more about the County's SRTS program, please visit the webpage by clicking on [this link](#). The three intersections where we are recommending safety improvements are Macduff*

Ave. (East) and Hines Road; Macduff Ave. (West) and Hines Road; and Sandy Knoll Drive and Hines Road. To enhance the visibility of the crossing, MCDOT will install pedestrian refuse islands and continental crosswalks at these three locations. Attached are the plans for the intersection. Regarding the schedule, we are planning to complete the project before the end of the summer.

- John reviewed requests from citizens for speed bumps and crosswalks that we'll follow-up with the MCDOT and/or SHA in June.
- The Committee has supported work in taking positions on the SAFE Streets Act as well as the STEP Act.
- Reaching out to Maryland DOT SHA representative Carm Saimbre for area spot work, clean-up.
 - Helene – put hash marks back in front of the shopping center. Mindy Badin followed up with Ms. Saimbre. We need to follow-up with her again.
 - Mr. Seng proposed to arrange for a simple thank-you ceremony from GOCA to MDDOT for successful Route 108 resurfacing.
- Aaron Kraut indicated that on the Hines Road issue, Paul Jarosinski had reached out to him, and he communicated that DOT had reached out to Paul. What Cherrywood will hear by end of week was that DOT will organize an in-person meeting and want to address those concerns.
- HOA members who are active concerned about local roadway safety and quality should contact John Seng to assist in GOCA Transportation Committee. JohnJSeng@gmail.com.

Olney Chamber of Commerce

No formal report. Curtis Chappell reflected on attending the Officer Noah Leotta Montgomery County Police substation dedication and thanked the Chamber for its leadership. Helene indicated that Officer Leotta's name will appear on the new structure.

New Business

No new business; other than Helene mentioning that Councilmember At-Large Will Jawando has been invited to speak at the next GOCA meeting on July 11 to review the STEP Act that he is sponsoring.

Adjournment

Helen Rosenheim adjourned the meeting at 8:43 pm

Calendar Items

- Next General Membership Meeting – Tuesday, July 11, 2023, at 7:30 PM

Send suggested agenda items for future GOCA meetings to goca.president@goca.org for review at monthly Officers' meetings.