



SEVEN OAKS –EVANSWOOD CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

of Silver Spring, Maryland

Your neighborhood association
working for a better community!

Join Us For Our Next Meeting

Thurs., January 18, 2007
starts at 7:00 p.m.,
At SLIGO CREEK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

AGENDA

**Topic: Downtown Silver
Spring Update**

Business Meeting:

Approval of the Minutes
Treasurer's Report
Announcements
Old Business: Reports
New Business

Adjourn by 9:00 p.m.

Attend our next meeting: SPECIAL JOINT MEETING

**With Park Hills Citizens Association
January 18, 2007 at 7:00 pm
LOCATION: Cafeteria, Sligo Creek
Elementary School.**

We will discuss:

- **Status of Downtown Silver Spring Revitalization**
- **Sligo Creek Pollution Update**
- **SOECA's position on the Bi-County Transitway**
- **Status of the Neighborhood Watch Program and installation of program signs**

*Please contact Mark Gabriele with any agenda items or
community issues that you would like addressed.*

***** Important Notice *****

SOECA will actively participate in the Bi-County Transitway study process if there's significant interest shown by our member households. We need to hear your thoughts about the proposed Bi-County Transitway, also referred to as the Purple Line, so that SOECA can develop a position that accurately reflects the interests of our community as a whole.

At our December meeting Dave Madden, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Project Manager, presented the current status of the project. The project is studying a number of proposed routes for above ground light rail or rapid bus transit service. Wayne Avenue is one of the routes being seriously studied. Since the transitway will have a significant impact on our neighborhood streets we would like to encourage the households in SOECA to let us know your opinions. For more information review the meeting summary on page 2 and visit the MTA's website: www.bi-countytransitway.com

OFFICERS

President:

Mark Gabriele

Vice President:

Jennifer Hollander

Secretary:

Ann Johnson

Treasurer:

Bill Kaupert

Meeting Minutes: December 7, 2006

Program: The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:40 p.m. Mark Gabriele introduced Mr. Mike Madden, Project Manager for the Bi-County Transitway Project (Purple Line) to provide an update on the latest alternatives being evaluated by Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the State Highway Association (SHA). MTA and SHA are studying the feasibility of a 14-mile rapid transit line extending from Bethesda Metro Station (Montgomery County) to the New Carrollton station (Prince Georges County). The system would provide direct access to the Metrorail system (Metro), connecting the two branches of the Red Line, the Green Line at College Park, and the Orange Line at New Carrollton. It will link to the University of Maryland Campus, to MARC and AMTRACK commuter rails, and local bus services. The study is evaluating the use of either Light Rail Transit (LRT) or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on various routes. Approximately 14 station locations are currently proposed, one of which is the newly designed Silver Spring Transit Center. Another proposed station in our area is at Arliss and Piney Branch Road. Mr. Madden focused the evening's presentation on Wayne Avenue, the proposed alignment through our neighborhood. He noted technical challenges of the Wayne Avenue route and the need for limited underground tunneling (an expensive component) to overcome the steep grade approaching Flower Avenue and in other areas. For more information visit the project's website at: www.bicountytransitway.com. Significant points are summarized below:

- The project is in the Alternative Analysis and draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIA) phase
- The Alternative Analysis phase evaluates proposed alternatives, assesses the impacts and costs of each alternative, and then compares the different alternatives based on established criteria
- Alternatives will be evaluated on cost, effectiveness (number of people carried), input from the public and elected officials.
- Project team emphasized the goal of the project is to maintain E-W flow of traffic in the year 2030 as the area significantly increases in population. The team is trying to find the best possible option to improve mobility and accessibility to mass transit. The project must improve travel time, dependability, and number of people transported to be effective.
- When similar systems have been built in other communities across the country (Portland, OR, Boston, MA) property values tend to increase rather than decrease because of the desire to live near and use public transportation to and from work..
- Study is looking at both LRT and RBT with dedicated and shared lane configurations for the Wayne Avenue alignment. In a shared lane the vehicles travel with existing traffic. If this is the case then no widening of Wayne Avenue would be needed. However, a dedicated lane for the transit vehicles would require road widening at some areas along Wayne.
- LRT vehicles have steel wheels and overhead wires; BRT vehicles have rubber wheels and use a hybrid fuel system. They are not as polluting as the regular, diesel buses.
- Light rail vehicles cannot make the hill on Wayne approaching Flower Avenue. Tunneling would be needed there.
- Light rail has more carrying power than RBT. LR vehicles frequency would be 6-8 minutes between trains. Buses would need to be more closely spaced (3-4 minutes) to match the same carrying power.
- Project Team is looking at signal prioritization where the signals are timed to allow buses to move beyond cars waiting for light and be first through intersections.
- Additional station locations are possible along the proposed route if the community wants them.
- The County is waiting to decide on the Green Trail (north side of Wayne Ave) until after decisions on the bi-county transitway routes are made.
- Cross sections of the proposed transit way along Wayne Avenue were shown. Wayne Avenue is 60-70' wide in areas and with dedicated lanes for the transitway there would be 2 transit lanes and 2 traffic lanes. It was noted that there would be some widening of Wayne needed to accommodate the Green Trail, possibly up to 4 feet on each side in some areas and less than that in other areas. Those details will be further evaluated in the more detailed studies to follow once decisions have been made on the routes.
- Transitway stops are designed to be Kiss & Ride or walk-to locations. No parking is envisioned since parking lots already exist at all Metro stations.
- There are 8 focus groups providing input during the decision making process. One is for the East Silver Spring alignments or routes.

Meeting attendees then posed several questions to the project team. Topics included parking issues for homeowners on Wayne Avenue; traffic impacts during construction; how to protect our neighborhoods from cut-through traffic (trying to avoid construction); pollution associated with buses; project schedule implications now with a new governor and administration; traffic implications associated with above ground light rail at the entrance to Whole Foods parking lot; and the fact that at present, there are no signs advocating or opposing the transitway along the Wayne Ave. routing.

Business Meeting

Minutes: The minutes of the November 2006 meeting were approved with the following amendment to the Treasurer's report. Eleven (not three) new members have joined SOECA and 183 members have paid the 2006-2007 membership dues. The minutes were then approved.

Treasurer's Report for 12/7/06: The Treasurer reported a checking account balance of \$5,152.64, as of November 30, 2006; the current Certificate of Deposit matured December 8, 2006 with the value of \$2,137.84. A membership report was provided: One new member household joined in December increasing the paid membership to 184 households. **Please remember to turn in your member dues. Dues are only \$10 per household (\$5 for singles or senior citizens).**

Old Business:

Announcements/Discussion:

Neighborhood Watch Program: Additional watch signs have been ordered and are expected for installation in the next few months. If you would like to help out with this important program, please contact Elaine Ellis.

Colesville Road Lane Shift Proposal: Based on discussions at the October meeting, SOECA sent a letter to the State Highway Department requesting that the State consider the current status of lane shifts on Colesville Road during rush hours (see October newsletter). When a response is received it will be reported at meetings and through this newsletter.

Springvale Terrace is under new management. The management group is based in Roanoke, VA.

Membership and Newsletter Distribution: The newsletter is delivered to 800 households in the SOECA area, whether your household is an active/paid member or not. Community information is being brought to you by a number of dedicated volunteers in an effort to keep you informed. So take the next step and support SOECA's efforts: Become a Member (see membership form below). If you would like to help deliver the SOECA newsletters to a small number of households near you, please contact Raul Camino. We really need you!

New Business/Reports:

SOECA Position on Purple Line: The attendees spent considerable time discussing whether or not SOECA should take a formal position on the bi-county transitway project. The group discussed the importance of having our collective voice heard during the decision making process. Community involvement is vitally important to the decision makers and can make a significant difference in the eventual outcome. However, it was stressed that SOECA needs to assess a representative number of the member households (not only adopt the opinion(s) of members that regularly attend the SOECA meetings. The group discussed sending a questionnaire, holding a special meeting in February, and other options. A subcommittee dedicated to this issue may be established to further research this issue and develop an action plan.



If you have an opinion or just want more information about this important issue facing our community be sure to contact Mark Gabriele or one of the SOECA officers!

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Mark Your Calendar
Future SOECA Meeting Dates
Thursday, January 18, 2007
Thursday, March 1, 2007
Thursday, April 5, 2007
Thursday, May 17, 2007

HOW TO JOIN SOECA'S LISTSERV:

- Send an e-mail to: soeca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com with the word “subscribe” in the subject line.
- You will then receive an e-mail reply at your inbox from “Yahoo Groups”.
- Click on “Reply” and then “Send” to return confirmation of your desire to join.
- You can post a message to the community by sending an e-mail to:
soeca@egroups.com or soeca@yahoogroups.com

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TO BECOME A MEMBER OF SOECA

Send this slip plus \$10 annual household dues (\$5 for senior citizens and single members) to: Bill Kaupert, SOECA Treasurer, 9222 Manchester Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail (optional): _____

SOECA wants to hear your thoughts about the Proposed Bi-County Transitway, also referred to as the Purple Line. Help SOECA develop a representative position on the project: Contact SOECA by email: soeca.board@gmail.com with your opinions by February 1, 2007.