



SEVEN OAKS –EVANSWOOD CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

of Silver Spring, Maryland

SOECA NEEDS OFFICERS

Are you looking for a way to help improve your community and meet lots of civic-minded people? You're in luck – your community needs you to help out. We'll be establishing a nominating committee at this meeting to enlist candidates for SOECA positions.

- **Join SOECA's Listserv.** The listserv got a workout during the recent snowstorms. Neighbors kept in close touch with one another, tracking power outages and restoration, successfully lobbying PEPCO to repair the power outage affecting Springvale Terrace Assisted Living Community, and sharing tips on keeping your home dry and utilities working. Here's how you join:

HOW TO JOIN SOECA'S LISTSERV:

There are two ways to join the SOECA Listserv:

(1) Via email

- Send an e-mail to: soeca-subscribe@yahogroups.com with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.
- The ListServe moderator will email you asking for your name and address by response email and after this email exchange, the moderator will add you to the list-serve.
- You will then receive a confirmation e-mail from "Yahoo Groups" of your addition to the list-serve

(2) Via Yahoo Groups at <http://groups.yahoo.com/> (if you already have, or will set up, a free yahoo id)

- Find SOECA and click "Join this Group."
- Fill in the form, including the email address you wish to use, adding a comment about yourself and why you would like to join the group, and click "Join" at the bottom.
- The ListServe moderator will email you asking for your name and address by a personal response email and after this email exchange, the moderator will add you to the list-serve.
- You will then receive a confirmation e-mail from "Yahoo Groups" of your addition to the list-serve

You can post a message to the community by sending an e-mail to: soeca@egroups.com or soeca@yahogroups.com (Note that it can sometimes take several minutes for your post to be visible so please wait before sending the message again thinking it didn't get through.)

NEXT MEETING:

**Thurs. March 4th,
2010**

**7:30 – 9:00 p.m.,
at the
Silver Spring Library**

AGENDA

- (tentative: see website for final agenda at www.soeca.org)

- **Updates / new information on The Fillmore project**

Other updates

New business:
discussion of library parcel

Business Meeting:

Old Business:
Approval of Minutes
Treasurers Report
New Business

Adjourn by 9:30 p.m.

Future SOECA Meetings:

- Tuesday, April 20
- Wednesday, May 26

SOECA Minutes January 14, 2010

Meeting was called to order by SOECA President Mark Gabriele at 7:37 pm.

Traffic Calming on Dale Drive. Mr. Kursheed Bilgrami, Traffic Operations Engineer, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, reviewed a County proposal to slow traffic along Dale Drive through SOECA neighborhoods, from Colesville Road to Queen Anne's Drive. Mr. Bilgrami and the County are working with other communities to calm traffic on other portions of Dale Drive. The County welcomes community comment. Please convey your comments either directly to Mr. Bilgrami or through any SOECA Board Member.

SOECA Vice President Kathleen Samiy thanked neighbor Bruce Altevegot for working over the last several years with the County to coordinate traffic calming efforts on Dale Drive.

Mr. Bilgrami explained that the concept lines for the traffic calming proposals he was about to present were developed over a period of time and included walk-throughs of the area, including one on July 7 2009 with Bruce Altevegot, other neighbors and a representative from County Council member Valerie Ervin's office. Mr. Bilgrami presented traffic calming engineering solutions for various portions of Dale Drive. He noted that there are no stop signs in the plan; stops signs are prohibited on thoroughfares between state roads. The County's Dale Drive traffic calming project will be funded through the County Improvement Project (CIP) fund. The project is in early planning phases and does not yet have a specific budget figure associated with it. The proposal conforms to the Federal Highway Administration Manual on Uniform Traffic Control.

The first proposed intervention at Dale and Ellsworth involves building bump outs to narrow the traffic lanes (example at Sligo Avenue and Chicago Avenue in East Silver Spring); painting a crosswalk on the east corner of the south side of Ellsworth and Dale, so when walking from Sligo Creek Park toward downtown Silver Spring on Ellsworth, a pedestrian would have to turn left on Dale, walk a few feet on the sidewalk and then cross Dale in the crosswalk; shortening the turning radius onto Ellsworth for cars traveling on Dale from Colesville Rd toward Wayne Ave. The County has passed this design to the bicycle community for comment. The County is considering adding a two foot bicycle lane between the curb and traffic lane, but must review available rights of way. The travel lanes for cars need to be 11 feet wide.

The second intersection eligible for new engineering is at Dale and Pershing. The County proposes bump outs and a crosswalk onto the west side of Pershing. Mr. Bilgrami noted that all crosswalks will meet highly visible international standards.

The County proposes an island (pedestrian refuge) and crosswalk for Dale and Greenbrier. The crosswalk will be placed east of Greenbrier. The island is 25' long and 6.5' wide. This proposal would require widening on Dale to maintain 11' travel lanes. The County would need to use the right of way a little bit.

At Dartmouth, the County proposes a crosswalk at the east side of the road. Driver sight lines on Dale are a challenge due to the road geometry, so the County suggests sharpening the radius on the south side of Dale. The County will have to use right of way over a 75 foot length of Dale Drive to improve sight lines. The County also proposes installing two bump outs east of Ashford to squeeze the road to slow people down as they approach Dartmouth.

The traffic calming proposals include signage reminding motorists that it is the state law to stop for pedestrians at crosswalk signs as well as pavement markings to call attention to crosswalk.

First Baptist Church Property Development. Joshua Adler, one of the managing partners of Lakritz Adler Real Estate Investments, and Mark Bombaugh, their architect from Silver Spring-based firm Torti Gallas, described proposed development of the First Baptist Church property located between Wayne Avenue and Bonifant Street from Fenton Street to the Saint Michael's Church School. The developer has been working with the church for three years on an "urban infill" project that will result in a new church on the eastern portion of the property and the development of the western portion of the property into apartment/condo units with street-level retail space. The church's property includes, in addition to the current church, a parking lot that borders Bonifant Ave., two houses and the church. All will be demolished and developed. The developer will build the church in exchange for the property on the western portion.

The developers described the challenge of transitioning between the Silver Spring CBD and single family home neighborhoods. The County master plan allows for that parcel on the eastern side of Fenton Street, a five-story building with retail at the ground floor level and four stories of residences above. The developers said that they are sensitive to the height of the building and its characteristics. They will not be asking for any zoning variances. They indicated that they want to link the development to Fenton Village and other new development to the west (library, etc). They wanted to keep the church in the community where they have a long standing presence. Zoning requires they develop public use space as part of the project.

The development as proposed now includes continuous retail on Fenton Street linking Fenton Village to "Downtown Silver Spring," (the Foulger Pratt/Peterson Cos. project which includes Whole Foods, the Marriott Courtyard, Majestic Theater, and Ellsworth restaurants). There will be a 15' setback on both Wayne and Fenton, and a 10' setback on Bonifant. The Baptist Church will be on

the east side of the site with its front on Wayne Avenue, but the entrance to the church will be from the courtyard, which will be on the west side of the church. The church will be two stories tall at Wayne, 40 to 45' high. For the retail/residential building on Fenton, there will be a one story grade change between Wayne and Bonifant, since the terrain slopes down in that direction. The building will be 60' tall at the corner of Fenton and Wayne and 70' tall at the corner of Fenton and Bonifant, and 66' feet tall on Bonifant in the back of the building. The building will be five stories in most places, but six stories on Bonifant, where the grade is lower. One can enter courtyard space from Wayne Avenue. There will be a passage with stairs down to more public space. There will be a 3,500 square foot playground to be used by the church's daycare children and by the community when the daycare is not using it.

Right now, the developer is planning for 200 apartments in the residential portion, not condos. There will be 38,000 feet per floor. Ground level retail will cover 25,000 square feet. There will be parking underground, 130 spaces, 116 for residents (at .58/unit) and 14 spaces for church employees and handicapped church members. The developer will pay into the parking pool in downtown Silver Spring. Parishioners will use garages nearby when attending activities in the church.

There will be a loading dock on the Bonifant side of the building, at grade with a door. Developers measured Bonifant St to make sure there was enough turning radius for delivery trucks. SOECA members expressed concern about the loading dock interfering with what is a narrow street on Bonifant and already a challenging and congested intersection.

The developers said that they are open to questions and suggestions from the community. The estimated time line for the planning approval process for the project starts in late February or early March when the drawings are submitted to the County; the initial plans should be approved by the Planning Board by July; the site plan submission takes six months; site plan acceptance should take one year; the building permits take another year; they plan to start construction about two or two and a half years from now, or between January 2012 and July 2012.

SOECA meeting participants asked:

Question: Is there a commitment to this project whether or not the Purple Line and the station across the street at the new library is built?

Answer: Yes there is a commitment to this. Planning started before the Purple Line station/route was decided.

Question: What is the view of the Church from the house right next to church? Fencing, detail not decided.

Answer: We hope to create public space (said the architect). The developer does handsome work.

Question: How many units are MPDUs (Moderately Priced Dwelling Units)?

Answer: 12.5% are MPDUs. Additional 10% have to be workforce housing. Close to 25% of units are MPDUs or reasonably priced. They will be scattered throughout the building.

Question: By replacing the church we will lose work by a prestigious architect. The current church building was built in 1956 by a prominent local Seventh Day Adventist architect, Roger Sorensen. Do we want to lose that church and everything it stands for in Silver Spring? Sorensen designed other local churches. The valuable steel steeple is 40 feet high.

Question: I am worried about traffic abatement and cut through traffic down to Dale Drive, not high intensity retail use. We are talking more than 100 extra cars from the building.

Question: Would you be willing to enter into an agreement with the County to prohibit left turns from the garage onto Bonifant so as to mitigate the impact of increased traffic into the residential neighborhood down Bonifant?

Answer: We will look at it.

Question: This will be an imposing presence on Bonifant. A height 66 to 70 feet is imposing. Could it be reduced with sloping roofs or other way to mitigate? Could you increase setback from Bonifant? In current design it is 10 feet.

Answer: In trying to make the building more appealing to the community, we could not have more than a 10-foot setback on Bonifant. Goal was to create good public space near neighborhood.

Question: Isn't parking space ratio of .58 low?

Answer: Rental optimal is .58; optimal for selling condos, 1:1 is better. It is shocking how expensive it is to build underground parking. The further underground you go, the more expensive it is per space. There is no room for surface parking lot.

Question: Address parking ratio: increase number parking ratios or lower number of units. Can you lower number of units?

Answer: The rule of thumb is 200 rental units to make it profitable. Haven't decided how many of each bedroom. One plan is to have 20% two bedroom units, 15 % one bedroom and den, 15% one bedroom 15% efficiencies.

Question: Is the playground available all the time?

Answer: Daycare playgrounds are listed as public use in the code. They are not open all the time. They are closed when daycare is using them.

Question: What are the opportunities for public comment and places where we can have influence about this project?

Answer: There are numerous opportunities for input. When plans are filed, there are a series of public notifications along the way. After they file, you can talk to planning staff to give your opinions. You can go to Planning Board meeting after that.

Question: One other possibility: before you submit the plan to the Planning Department, would you be open to a smaller meeting with representatives of the two civic associations which are affected and the nearby residential neighborhood to see whether modifications of the project are possible that would satisfy both you and the community?

Answer: Yes, we could do that..

Question: I think this is going to be a nice project. I moved here three years ago from downtown. This is a nice place to raise kids with a lot of people around. I like dense places. I want more shops, more vibrancy. As an architect, this looks like the developer and architect used a lot of intelligent design moves.

Question: The church is a handsome structure. What is the historic value? Could it be on historic register?

Answer: Yes, it came up. The church went through development process with a different development. There was a hearing on matter of church being landmark.

Response: No, there was no public hearing.

Answer: The church says they are not a registered historical place.

Question: Please build what you show us. In the past, we were promised beautiful buildings in various places. The County lets developers get away with building garbage buildings. We need good finishes.

Question: Please be sensitive: This is the gateway to the Bonifant community.

Answer: We care what our projects look like. Economic studies show this site can support the highest market rents in SS. It is across from Whole Foods, DTSS, two blocks from the Red Line, across from the new library, etc. It will pay off to make it nicer.

Question / Request: please do more work on the Bonifant side, make it look like a front entrance.

Procedural. Move to adjourn unanimously approved at 9:45 pm.

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: _____

Would you like to receive this newsletter by email? Yes No (please circle one)

If yes, please print email address here: _____