

Situated in the green hills & valleys of Sligo Creek & its tributaries, abutting the burgeoning downtown Silver Spring

Seven Oaks Evanswood



CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND

Next meeting: THURSDAY, FEB. 19, 7:30 pm, SILVER SPRING INT'L MIDDLE SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER.

A joint meeting with Park Hills Citizens' Association featuring new District 5 Councilmember Tom Hucker.

Purple Line Update

Design and build operations continue while Gov. Hogan deliberates. Incoming Secretary of Transportation Pete Rahn said in January that he hopes to give Hogan his recommendation on light rail "within 90 days." MTA always planned to break ground on the Purple Line in 2015 and continues to work on that schedule.

- **Right-of-way (ROW) & property acquisition** are going on now: **wooden stakes** are visible along Wayne Ave. marking old and new ROW lines. No homes along Wayne are condemned, but MTA and the County will use most of the current ROW, sometimes more. MTA is in direct talks with property owners where additional purchase is required.

- **March 9 deadline for bidders:** Deadline is March 9 for bidders' proposals: The four firms selected by MTA to bid for the Public-Private Partnership that will build the Purple Line and operate it for 30 years must submit their full bids by March 9, a two-month extension from the original submission date.

SOECA has been part of discussions with County and State officials over high-impact issues such as the width of Wayne Ave. (widening is planned at Fenton and Cedar, and up to seven lanes at Dale Dr.), locating the power substation so it is not on top of homes, and keeping Wayne green, since current plans will take out all the trees near Wayne sidewalks. Those discussions have paused pending the Governor's decision and the selection of the concessionaire.

February 2015 Issue

Next meeting:

Thursday, February 19

7:30 – 9:00 pm

Silver Spring International
Middle School Media Ctr.

AGENDA

Joint meeting with Park Hills
Civic Association

7:30 – 8:30: Councilmember Tom
Hucker

8:30: Purple Line, SS Library,
Dale Drive pedestrian safety, and
other items

In this issue:

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The next contra dance at the Civic Building takes place on Thursday, Feb. 12, 7:00 – 10:00. All dances are taught; come early for the beginners' session. \$10 (FSGW members, \$8).

SOECA boundaries are: Colesville Road on the West, Cedar and Fenton Streets on the South, Bonifant and Wayne on the East, and Franklin and Caroline Avenues on the North.

BRT advisory committee

SOECA resident Lori Zeller will represent us on the County's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor Advisory Committee for the US 29 South corridor. The County-wide BRT plan aims to relieve congestion with frequent express buses in dedicated lanes on some major roads. US 29/Colesville Rd. BRT will support the proposed life sciences village in White Oak. Lori has a Master's in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers with a concentration on transportation and works at the EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities. She will keep us informed and accept input through the listserv.

A County Transit Authority?

County Executive Leggett recently proposed a State bill enabling the County to create an independent transit authority (ITA) funded by an added property tax exempt from Charter limits on property tax increases. The ITA would fund BRT, Ride On and parking lots County-wide, and possibly the Purple Line. It could issue bonds and hold debt apart from the County's AAA general bond limits. In a Jan. 30 hearing, dozens of people opposed the legislation, and many supporters called for stronger accountability and keeping tax increases within the Charter limits. Leggett withdrew the bill and is looking for options on how to fund transit projects in the County. Write to oce@montgomerycountymd.gov with suggestions.

SSCAB Update

The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board (SSCAB) January meeting was briefed on the County budget process and on data tools. The Open Budget platform (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/omb/openbudget.html) includes an online operating budget and a tool, Budget Montgomery, that makes how our money is budgeted far more visible. The newest tool, Spending Montgomery (spending.data.montgomerycountymd.gov/) extends this to most County payments. With this meeting and the January 14 Budget Forum as background, the Feb. 9 SSCAB meeting will discuss a letter on budget priorities, and will meet with Councilmember Hans Riemer about various local initiatives, as well as a presentation and discussion about the "free range parenting" topic that has been raised in our community. More information is in Regional Service's Director Reemberto Rodriguez's email blasts online, bit.ly/1vvn3py, or in Facebook events, [on.fb.me/1BZbzt4](https://www.facebook.com/1BZbzt4).

The Future of the Old Library

The Silver Spring Library will move to Wayne & Fenton this spring, possibly by the end of May. The "old" Silver Spring Library and parking lots are available for reuse by other local government agencies. The process of County agencies, Parks Department, MCPS, and others expressing interest in the property is now going on. The Planning Board will hear the Parks Department plan at a public hearing on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 1:15 pm, 8787 Georgia Ave. auditorium.

SOECA is on record supporting an Ellsworth Park expansion and using the building for intergenerational recreation. There are a lot of new SOECA residents who might have different ideas and want to weigh in with the Planning Board and County Executive.

Silver Spring Timebank (SSTB)

The SSTB is open for business. Timebanking is a way of giving and receiving to build a more cohesive community. Membership is open to anyone who lives, works or plays in Silver Spring. Members offer their time and talents to others and earn Timebank hours, which they can then use to request services from others. Sample services include music or computer lessons, gardening help, house repairs, and more!

<https://www.hourworld.org/bank/?hw=1302>

Protecting Pets in Frigid Weather

Dogs, cats, and other pets can and do freeze to death if left outside during the worst of winter, so they must be brought inside. The General Assembly is holding hearings on "The Extreme Weather Protection Act" (HB 153; SB 26), which would prevent leaving a pet outside and unattended in a declared snow emergency or when it is 32°F or below for at least an hour.

In the meantime, the County's Animal Service can help. If you see a dog or other animal in distress, whether left out in the cold or for another reason, and the owner is absent or unwilling to act, contact:

- 9-1-1
- Police Animal Services Division: 240-773-5900, or to talk to an Animal Services officer, 240-773-5925
- Police non-emergency number: 301-279-8000

Tree Canopy Initiative

The tree program started last spring by Sligo Creek Neighbors for a Sustainable Community, Inc. (SCNSCI) to provide homeowners with new trees is planning its second planting for this spring. To get one or more trees or have a stump removed, contact SCNSCI at sevenoaksevanswood@gmail.com.

- **Private property.** SCNSCI will set up a meeting with Casey Trees (CT), who will meet with you and help choose the right tree from their brochure, for a co-pay of \$25. SCNSCI covers the remaining costs. CT has a list of species (brochure at bit.ly/1nioj6X), but availability, space, moisture, and soil affect choices. Trees are usually 1½" to 2" in diameter, 6 ft. to 10 ft. tall.
- **Public right-of-way (ROW).** SCNSCI will bundle requests and pass them on to the County, which has a bit more money for trees than in recent years. A County arborist will visit and determine whether the site is appropriate for a large or a small tree, based on utility locations and tree placement regulations. You then choose a tree from their list (bit.ly/1joV4Re).
- **Other tree programs** include the Park & Planning Dept.'s "Leaves for Trees" program (bit.ly/1qW1PrM) and the Dept. of Environmental Protection's large-scale rebates for rain gardens (bit.ly/1sIPXyQ).
- **Stump removal.** SCNSCI will bundle requests for the County to remove ROW stumps. They will also bundle requests for removing stumps on private property and help find a vendor at a reduced cost.
- **Tree care.** Tree care is broken down by season in the CT brochure. Conservation Montgomery offers "Tree Care 101" for \$20 per person, usually on a Saturday morning. Contact SCNSCI if you're interested.
- **Volunteer!** SCNSCI needs help to spread the word and work with Casey Trees and our neighbors to assemble orders and coordinate site visits.

Water Watchdogs

Anne Vorce and Water Watchdogs (WWD) continue to monitor runoff events from the Chelsea construction site and from other sources in downtown Silver Spring, reporting problems to the Dept. of Permitting Services (DPS). Most, but not all, potential problems in advance of storms have been headed off. If you see a runoff problem, or other pollution, in Sligo Creek, send email to WWS at **ReportSligoPollution@fos.org**. It will be relayed directly to DPS.

Minutes of October 28 Meeting

The meeting, held at Silver Spring Library, included election of officers for 2014-15 and a presentation from WSSC about water main replacement work.

- **The SOECA election** was to have been in May, but was preempted by a joint SOECA-Park Hills candidates' forum. A motion to hold elections in October this year was passed, and the slate was elected: Jean Cavanaugh (President), Michael Gurwitz (Vice President), Tom Armstrong (Secretary), and Bill Kaupert (Treasurer).

- **Water main replacement** was described by Clayton Stewart (WSSC) and colleagues. The Sligo III Project (bounded by Windsor/Bennington, Kingsbury, Woodside Pkwy., and Schuyler, plus Mayfair from Ellsworth to Pershing) will replace 4- to 8-in. mains plus pipes to each house from the main to the property line.

Disruptions include temporary mains for parts of the construction (other parts will use new trenches, so won't need them) and some short shutdowns. Service will be maintained, roads will be accessible, and work will occur on weekdays from 8 to 4. Temporary road patches will be in place for a few months to allow them to settle, and will then be replaced. Completion is estimated for Aug. 2016.

- **Questions during the Q&A** afterward included:
 - Water pressure: There will be no change in pressure in the mains after completion, but if the old connection to your house was partly clogged, you may notice more pressure or more flow.
 - Trees: Fourteen trees will be taken down. WSSC has replacements for seven. For the others, there isn't appropriate space in front of the houses, and WSSC is looking for other places for them.
 - Coordinating with other utilities: There is a public database of utility activities, not always accurate. Our guests said they try to coordinate so streets won't be dug up repeatedly, but when asked if they'd delay work to accommodate Washington Gas, they said no.
- **The Purple Line power substation** planned for the corner of Greenbrier and Wayne may be moved. Meanwhile, everyone is waiting for election results.
- **The Three Oaks Drive project** near Sligo Creek Pkwy., would clear cut and subdivide the 2/3 acre urban forest into three lots and build a house on each. With input from Planning staff and environmentalists, the Planning Board reduced it to two houses, which is still problematic for tree loss and runoff control. A motion was passed to support the neighbors' group with \$200 toward attorney's fees that will total \$500.
- **The Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Advisory Committee** is seeking members. Jean asked for volunteers. [Three later volunteered, and Jean nominated Lori Zeller.]
- **Tree replacement programs**, described by Kathleen Samiy, include a Casey Trees project led by SCNSCI [see above] and the County's increased efforts. The Casey plantings are planned for November, with more to follow in the spring.
- **Treasurer Bill Kaupert's report** shows that the SOECA checking account stands at \$4822.38, and that one new household has joined since May.

**Seven Oaks Evanswood
Citizens Association
Silver Spring, Maryland
www.soeca.org**

SOECA officers

Jean Cavanaugh, President

Kathleen Samiy, Past President

Michael Gurwitz, Vice President

Tom Armstrong, Secretary

Bill Kaupert, Treasurer

Resident volunteers

Jonathan Bernstein,

Listserv & web site manager

Contact SOECA:

soeca.board@gmail.com

Two ways to join SOECA's listserv:

1) Via email:

- Send an email to soeca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.
- The listserv moderator will email you asking for your name and address and will add you after you respond.
- You will receive a confirmation email from "YahooGroups."

2) If you have a Yahoo Groups account:

- Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com>, 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, and click on "Join."
- The listserv moderator will email you asking for your name and address and will add you after you respond.
- You will receive a confirmation email from Yahoo.

Once you have joined, post messages by sending email to soeca@egroups.com or soeca@yahoogroups.com.

SOECA membership 2013-14 Renew annual dues

Send this slip plus \$20 annual dues per household (\$10 for seniors and single members) to:

Bill Kaupert, SOECA Treasurer, 9222 Manchester Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Send an email to soeca.board@gmail.com if:

- You want to receive the newsletter electronically, or
- You want to check the status of your membership.

If you want to join the listserv, see the instructions above.

Note: Resident email addresses, street addresses, and phone numbers are not shared.