

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

**FOURTH MEETING OF 2013-14: TUESDAY, MAY 20,
7:00 pm, Cafeteria of SILVER SPRING INT'L MIDDLE
SCHOOL, at the corner of Dale Dr. and Wayne Ave.
Laugh about it, shout about it, when you've got to
choose: Come to the candidates' forum!**

County Council District 5 and Maryland House of Delegates District 20 candidates will attend our meeting, held jointly with Park Hills Civic Association, for a forum. Each will have a few minutes to speak, with an opportunity to answer questions afterwards. Five Democrats are running for the Council seat (no Republicans). There are nine Democrats and one Green Party candidate running for the three House seats. The primary election will take place on Tuesday, June 24.

Primary election dates: Early voting runs June 12 to 19, 10 am to 8 pm. The nearest early-voting site is the Silver Spring Civic Building. Election day is June 24; our polling place is Sligo Creek or Highland View Elementary School, depending on which side of the creek you live. For instructions on registering, voting early or absentee: www.elections.state.md.us/voting/

Minutes of the April 6 meeting

The meeting, held in the Washington Revels headquarters at Dale & Dartmouth, started with wine and cheese, and was called to order by President Jean Cavanaugh at 4:20. Our first topic was the tree program that a new nonprofit organization, Sligo Creek Neighbors for a Sustainable Community, Inc. (SCNSCI), is sponsoring in cooperation with Casey Trees.

May 2014 Issue

Next meeting:
Tuesday, May 20
7:00 – 9:30 pm
SSIMS cafeteria, Dale Dr. at
Wayne Ave.

AGENDA

- 7:00: New/old business
- 7:30 – 9:00: Council District 5 & Maryland House of Delegates District 20 candidates
- 9:00 – 9:30: Informal chat with candidates

In this issue:

- Election information and link
- April 6 minutes
- Tree initiative
- Purple Line, dog park updates

The next contra dance at the Civic Building takes place on Thursday, June 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.

Kathleen Samiy, Secretary of SCNSCI and Past President of SOECA, introduced **the tree initiative**. In Seven Oaks and Evanswood, we have lost much of our green canopy in recent years, due to age, Pepco, weather, and development, which has motivated SCNSCI to start this grant-supported program.

The program will provide trees to residents within the SOECA boundaries who request them, and will help find a vendor to remove stumps at a bulk rate. Those who want a tree on their property can get one through Casey Trees (CT) for a \$25 copayment. For those who want a tree in the County right-of-way (ROW) bordering their property, SCNSCI will bundle requests to the County, which will plant trees at no cost. SCNSCI will also bundle requests for ROW stump removal.

Mark Buscaino (CT Executive Director), Jim Woodworth (CT Director of Tree Planting), and Andrew Driscoll (County DOT Tree Maintenance Division) filled us in on many of the details of this tree replacement effort. Mr. Driscoll will be the liaison between SCNSCI/SOECA and the County.

One resident asked about replacing trees on public property, such as at SSIMS, where the Purple Line will remove numerous trees. DOT does not work with parks or schools, but CT works with about 30 schools per year, about a quarter of them outside DC.

[I have moved the details and background that Kathleen and the CT and County representatives presented to the Tree Canopy Initiative section, below. --TA]

Jim Conklin, a SOECA member, told us about **alternative electrical power sources**. Groundswell, an organization that pools demand for bulk purchases of alternative power (solar and wind), is reaching out to homeowners. There are about 1200 residences signed up this year. Go to www.groundswell.org/programs/for-homes. Expressions of interest were due April 16 [but there's always next year]. Customers can sign up when prices are finalized in April. Prices are fixed for one to two years.

To a question on the effects on migratory birds, Jim replied that bird deaths have been an issue with older wind installations, partly due to poor placement. The offshore wind site was chosen in part to avoid migratory paths. Current turbines turn slower than the old

ones, and he's told that they don't kill as many birds. But he also notes that fossil fuels also kill birds.

Anne Edwards gave an update on the **Purple Line's Transit Power Substation (TPSS)** proposed for Wayne Ave. at Cloverfield Rd./Greenbrier Dr. (labeled "Q6" on MTA's drawings). SOECA participates in two Purple Line (PL) groups. One, the Working Group for Residential Wayne Avenue Purple Line Design, includes the four civics along Wayne Ave. A wider group is the other is the Coalition of Purple Line Neighborhoods, which has met with County Executive Leggett.

There are still things that the groups are discovering, such as the 13-ft. retaining wall at Dale and Wayne, over which the residents have little direct influence. As a result, the Wayne Ave. group is going to elected officials; no politician has not heard from them.

The most pressing issue is TPSS Q6, because the RFP [request for proposals] – *which the public is not allowed to see!* – will be going to the four state-selected bidders within the next month or so. Unless the language is changed, the RFP will specify that Q6 will go at Wayne & Greenbrier. The MTA is spending money elsewhere in the County to mitigate its effects – tunneling Jones Bridge Rd. under the PL, bridging Connecticut Ave., making tunnels for golf carts – and it should mitigate them in east Silver Spring as well.

The TPSS will not be disguised as a house. It will be big, with a workyard with a high fence, and because it is unoccupied, it raises crime issues. It will be a conspicuous landmark along Wayne, and it will lower nearby property values because of how people perceive power substations. MTA will discuss the design, but doesn't want to move it, even though the Wayne Ave. group has proposed several alternatives, including four locations near Dale & Wayne, three near Whole Foods, and the Wayne Ave. Garage. If it were moved west to Whole Foods or the Garage, another TPSS might be needed to the east, near the school, to narrow the gap to the next TPSS further to the east. Adding a TPSS costs about \$1M, plus the building and maintenance. Anne has asked MTA to cost this against property value losses, but they won't do so.

The Wayne Ave. group intends to make sure the TPSS is moved by going to our elected officials. Anne urged SOECA members to write to multiple officeholders; email is taken seriously. The SOECA/Park Hills re-

sponse to the Final Environmental Impact Statement can be found on the SOECA web site.

Treasurer Bill Kaupert reported that the SOECA checking account stands at \$4553.97, and that four new households have joined since February. The February minutes were approved, and we adjourned at 5:48.

Tree Canopy Initiative

A new nonprofit organization, Sligo Creek Neighbors for a Sustainable Community, Inc. (SCNSCI), is providing homeowners with new trees! Our old trees are aging, and storms, Pepco and development have felled much of our lush green tree canopy, reducing it below healthy air quality levels.

We are putting new oaks and woods back into our community by planting young healthy trees to replenish and restore tree canopy. Please contact SCNSCI at sevenoaksevanswood@gmail.com to request a tree, remove a stump, or volunteer to help.

Private property trees. If you want a tree on your property, SCNSCI will set up a meeting with Casey Trees (CT), an organization that does community outreach and events, monitors tree canopy, and advocates for trees and for connecting people to re-green their neighborhoods. A CT arborist will meet with you, walk your property, and recommend the right tree for the right place. The price is right too: a copay of only \$25. SCNSCI will cover the remaining cost.

Casey Trees has a preliminary list of species, but availability can vary, and space, moisture and soil type affect the choices. Trees are typically 1½" to 2" in diameter, 6 ft. to 10 ft. tall. You choose the tree and species from their River Smart Homes brochure (bit.ly/1nioj6X). Tree lists will be finalized on Sept. 1 for fall planting and Jan. 30 for spring planting. Tree care, the residents' responsibility, is broken down by season in the CT brochure.

Public right-of-way (ROW) trees. If you want a tree in the County (ROW) abutting your property, SCNSCI will bundle your request with others and pass it on to the County, which has a bit more money for tree replacement 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 the County list (bit.ly/1joV4Re). The tree will be

planted in fall 2014 or spring 2015 depending on the County budget. There is no charge.

Stump removal. SCNSCI will bundle requests for the County to remove stumps in the ROW. SCNSCI will also bundle requests for removing stumps on private property and help find a vendor at a reduced cost.

Volunteer! SCNSCI needs help to spread the word and work with Casey Trees and our neighbors. Seven Oaks/Evanswood encompasses ~700 homes, so there is a lot of ground to cover. Volunteers will assemble orders and coordinate site visits.

Purple Line update

The effort to find a different location for the transfer power substation (TPSS) slated for Wayne Ave. at Cloverfield Rd./Greenbrier Dr. continues. See the Minutes, above, for a summary as of April 6. Since then, Congressman Chris Van Hollen has weighed in with a letter to James Smith, Secretary of MDOT, expressing concern that the MTA is not being responsive to citizens' concerns, including the location of TPSSs in residential areas. SOECA member Anne Edwards recommends emailing County, State, and Federal elected officials regarding the TPSS.

At an April 17 meeting with the Wayne Ave. PL group and others, MTA presented designs for the TPSS that dispensed with the need for a fenced workyard with an enlarged building, possibly implemented as distinct sections for architectural reasons.

Although MTA had not planned to discuss alternate locations for the TPSS, the meeting included a lively discussion of that topic. Prominent complaints were that MTA had not addressed several of the alternatives beyond saying that they would not be considered, and that MTA has not presented information to support their claims of excessive costs for other alternatives. Mike Madden, the PL project manager, said that MTA would gather and release that information.

Dog park update

The design for a dog park at Ellsworth Urban Park (next to the current Library) was approved by the Planning Board on April 24. It includes a 17,500 sq. ft. enclosed area with colored asphalt and artificial turf surfaces, boulders and fallen tree trunks for the dogs, and seating for the humans.

**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.