

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: **MONDAY, JUNE 13, 7:30 pm, SILVER SPRING INTERNATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA**

Suggested new committees

Following up on the discussion at the May 17 meeting, there are suggestions for two new committees for the membership to consider, and perhaps to adopt at this month's meeting.

Technology Committee: The mission of this committee will be to explore mechanisms for more online capabilities. The committee will focus on how to implement new or better options. The decision to actually implement a new capability will be made by SOECA members. The options and topics include:

- Listserv
- Polling
- Voting
- Website and hosting
- Web based membership database
- Payment of membership dues
- Distribution of the newsletter

Governance Committee:

The responsibility of this task force would be to look at ways to get a greater participation to achieve a community-wide position, specifically relating to how SOECA stands on particular significant issues. How do we arrive at a SOECA position? How does the association present a position? How do we listen to alternative views? How does the membership vote on taking a position that helps to promote a SOECA-wide consensus (to the extent possible)? How do we present a dissenting opinion to be more inclusive?

www.soeca.org | email: soeca.board@gmail.com

June 2016 Issue

Next meeting:
Monday, June 13
7:30 – 9:30 pm
Silver Spring International
Middle School Cafeteria

AGENDA

Business update
New committees discussion
Update on old library site
Traffic Task Force activities
Transit update: BRT, Purple Line
Other business

Also in this issue:

BRT meeting summary
Traffic Task Force
Silver Spring Village
Water Watchdogs
May 17 minutes

The next Thursday evening contra dances at the Civic Building are on July 14, Aug. 11, & Sept. 8, 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.

Bus Rapid Transit

Lori Zeller provided this summary of the May 24 meeting of the Corridor Advisory Committee to study Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Route 29 (the portion from New Hampshire Ave. to the Silver Spring Metro). Highlights include: 1) BRT will run almost entirely in existing right-of-way, requiring very little property acquisition; small acquisitions may be needed at BRT stations since they require more width. 2) The County has won a grant to study station concepts, and has applied for a TIGER grant. 3) The proposed station at Franklin Ave. has been removed due to relatively low ridership demand, and to environmental and property concerns. 4) The current service plan involves no significant change to local bus service. There are no proposed changes to Ride On service or to Metrobus Z2 and Z6 service, but there will be fewer Z8 trips than currently, and the Z7 and Z11 will be replaced by the BRT.

More detailed information on these as well as other items is in the meeting #6 presentation at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/RTS/us29section2.html. You may also reach out to Lori with questions or comments at ZellerTransit@gmail.com.

Purple Line public meeting

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) held a public meeting at the Silver Spring Civic Building on May 25 to present the current state of Purple Line plans and to introduce representatives of the Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP), the public private partnership that plans to build and operate it.

The meeting was requested last fall by the Residential Wayne Avenue Working Group for Purple Line Design to discuss ways to mitigate the effects of the Purple Line. The Working Group's concerns include the near doubling of the width of Wayne Ave. at Dale Dr., the dangers to pedestrians there and elsewhere, the wheel squeal due to the relatively tight curves along the route, the "forest of poles" effect of adding overhead power lines to the utilities already present, the clearcutting of large trees especially at Dale & Wayne, the lack of a stormwater management plan, and the imbalance across the County in investment in mitigation measures.

However, the meeting as conducted was no different from the several dozen other MTA-led Purple Line meetings over the years. Purple Line Deputy Project Manager Mike Madden and Herb Morgan (PLTP) used the first hour of the two hours allotted to show their slides of the current status of the project. The moderator refused to allow even factual questions.

As to some of the concerns raised by the Residential Wayne Ave. group: Wayne still becomes about 70 ft. wide; pedestrians will be given "plenty of time" to cross with pedestrian signals; an arborist will be hired by PLTP, and trees will be replaced on a caliper basis (e.g., a 10-inch-circumference tree would be replaced by ten 1-inch saplings), although where they would be planted (locally or elsewhere?) was not addressed; the proliferation of overhead wires was not mentioned; and Environmental Site Design stormwater control would be used.

Thirty minutes were allotted to questions and answers. The moderator did not allow any followup questions. When the need for a Dale Dr. station was questioned, Madden claimed that "it was always in the plan," which many members of the audience knew to be false. The conduct of the meeting by the MTA led to a sharply worded letter from Sen. Jamie Raskin, a Purple Line supporter, to Transportation Secretary Rahn pointing out that many in attendance felt that "MTA is not truly interested in hearing the concerns of the community."

Traffic Task Force

The traffic task force continues to gather information. Send your concerns to soecattraffic@gmail.com, or join the task force.

Silver Spring Village

Silver Spring Village, a "neighbors helping neighbors" network, is a nonprofit organization that offers services and programs to help people in 20910 age in place—remain in their homes while they continue to be a vital part of the community. To learn more, call 301-503-7401 or visit www.silverspringvillage.org.

Water Watchdogs

The Friends of Sligo Creek **Water WatchDogs** (WWD) citizen pollution reporting system, headed by Anne Vorce, monitors Sligo Creek and its tributaries for runoff events from sites throughout the SOECA neighborhoods and downtown. Anyone can use WWD to report problems to the Dept. of Permitting Services (DPS). If you see a runoff problem or other pollution, email WWD at ReportSligoPollution@fosc.org. It will be relayed directly to DPS.

Minutes of May 15 Meeting

Treasurer David Hartmann reported \$6659.69 in the checking account, discussed the possibilities of having some SOECA meetings on weekends (the school is more expensive then; other possibilities were men-

tioned), and that a listserv poll chose, 47 to 35, to keep “reply all” as the default when responding.

The nominating committee (Carolyn Michel), presented the slate of officers for 2016-17 (see the May newsletter), which was adopted unanimously.

Steve Peck, a participant in the stakeholder committee on the old library, reported on the process. The committee had representatives from SOECA, Chelsea Hts., the Woodside and Indian Spring associations, the YMCA, Action Montgomery, and the Departments of General Services, of Recreation, and of Parks. At the first meeting, in April, the County summarized the objectives, criteria, and process. The second meeting, for the stakeholders to report back to the County was first scheduled for later in April and then pushed back to June. The County is not in a hurry, but would like decisions by next spring.

The stakeholders’ main involvement will be providing input to the request for proposals (RFP). The County has already started saying that they are looking for senior housing, perhaps 30% affordable and the rest at market rate. They feel that owning the land presents them with an opportunity. They are interested in including a multigenerational facility, and they want to use a public-private partnership (P3) to build and operate the project.

The County will take the stakeholders’ input into consideration, and the group is likely to participate in evaluating proposals. The County will present its choice of the best two and take input from the stakeholders at that point.

In answering a range of questions, Steve said (1) that the stakeholders’ committee per se would have no role after the second meeting; (2) The County is giving no incentive in the RFP for renovating the current building, but we could ask for that as a criterion; (3) We could add a height limit as another criterion; (4) building a tall structure would require rezoning; (5) The stakeholders pushed for information about whether there’s a need for senior housing; (6) The group did not seem knowledgeable about traffic plans; (7) A “multigenerational facility” is not the same as a “recreation center,” although a rec center can be multigenerational; (8) It’s hard to know how to set performance criteria for a P3.

Steve also showed a handout with a number of talking points for the stakeholders take back to their communities, most of which were touched on in the discussion.

President (now Past President) Jonathan Shurberg turned the discussion to SOECA committees in light of suggestions from an informal outside meeting. He

started by describing the Traffic Task Force, which is looking into ways of dealing with traffic issues, traffic signs, and the traffic plan. He then formed it as the Traffic Committee, with Leslie Hansley and Beth Jewell as members. Anyone can participate, and email can be sent to soecattraffic@gmail.com or the listserv.

He praised, and made official, the Social Committee, appointed Carolyn Michell to it, and went on to the Technology Committee, which includes Jonathan Bernstein, David Hartmann, and others. They are looking at such issues as: is the listserv the best way of communicating; could we have a web-based membership database; could we pay dues on line, and can we distribute the newsletter electronically.

Jonathan pointed out that there are also groups not under the SOECA umbrella that SOECA members participate in: the library group, and the group looking at Purple Line mitigation along Wayne Ave., and the Bus Rapid Transit group.

He then brought up the governance committee idea that also came out of the outside meeting, and asked Liz Brent to describe it.

Liz said that the idea arose because the bylaws are short and don’t delve into the workings of SOECA. Questions listed in her handout included: When and on what issues does SOECA decide to take a position? How is a position arrived at? Should there be online polling or voting? How does a vote promote consensus? How is a position presented after a decision? How do we listen to alternative views? How do we present a dissenting position to be more inclusive? One member said that these are Board questions. Liz responded that she doesn’t see this committee as making decisions. Others pointed out that this committee, like any, can take suggestions to the Board or to the membership.

Jonathan said that the Technology and Governance Committee ideas would be discussed at the next meeting, and adopted if the membership wishes.

Two topics came up before adjournment. One member asked about caring for the flower bed at Ellsworth Park. The County has no budget to do so. Should we have a Garden Committee? Second, the bike loop around downtown is coming soon, with protected lanes along Cedar St. Some metered parking between Wayne and Cedar will be lost.

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

SOECA officers

Michael Bufalini, President

Jonathan Shurberg, Past President

Tina Guina, 1st Vice President

Michael Gurwitz, 2nd Vice President

Tom Armstrong, Secretary

David Hartmann, Treasurer

Resident volunteers

Jonathan Bernstein, Listserv & web site manager, SSCAB rep

Lori Zeller, BRT Committee rep

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 Form

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

David Hartmann, SOECA Treasurer, 407 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home _____ Cell _____ Email _____

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.