



September 2018 Issue

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 13, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Media Center at Silver Spring International Middle School.

2018-19 SOECA Membership Meeting Dates

Meetings are in the Media Center at Silver Spring International Middle School unless noted otherwise.

Thursday, September 13, 2018 from 7-9 PM

Wednesday, November 14, 2018 from 7-9 PM

Saturday, January 12, 2019 from 3-5 PM—*Note different date and time for this meeting*

Wednesday, March 13, 2019 from 7-9 PM

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 from 7-9 PM

Come Celebrate the Arrival of Fall!

Wednesday, September 26, 2018 from 5-7 PM at Mrs. K's Tollhouse Restaurant.

Join us at Mrs. K's, in the downstairs bar, with a separate back room set up just for us! Enjoy munchies from the wonderful bar menu courtesy of the SOECA Board, and all drinks are priced for happy hour, available for purchase at the bar.

Please join us to say hello to your neighbors, new and old. No need to sign up or RSVP for the Happy Hour—Just save the date and come on over.

SOECA 2018 Block Party: An "Autumn Harvest" Halloween

When: Saturday October 27 from 3-7 PM (rain date Sunday October 28)

Where: Bennington Drive, between Ellsworth Drive and Bennington Lane

Who: Everyone is invited, adults, teens, kids and dogs on leashes.

Please mark your calendars for the SOECA Block Party, a chance to:

- Celebrate the cooler weather and change in seasons with your neighbors
- Judge the best Halloween kids costumes and the cutest dogs.

We will provide a DJ, music, drinks, games, raffle prizes and a costume contest for kids and dogs. Please bring potluck food to share, books and plants to exchange, and invite your children (and your dogs) to dress up to compete for the funniest, scariest and cutest Halloween costumes. The raffle will feature prizes of interest to all.

Want to be part of the Block Party planning process? We welcome your participation. Just contact the SOECA Social Committee: Lynn and Tad Grodzki: lynngrodzki@gmail.com or Cell: 301.512.5636.

SOECA Officers

Michael Bufalini, President
Onuka Ibe, Vice President
Chris Reynolds, Vice President
David Hartmann, Treasurer
Kristen Conte, Secretary

Notes from the SOECA Board

Jonathan Bernstein and Michael Bufalini are working on transition our Listserv to a new platform. Emails will be sent to everyone on the current listserv when the change is made.

Also, a committee has been formed to review and update SOECA's bylaws. Anyone interested in joining that committee should email soeca.board@gmail.com.

Agenda for September Meeting

1. Approve Meeting Agenda
2. Approve Minutes
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Announcements and Committee Reports
5. Volunteer Recognition
6. New Business

SOECA Boundaries

Colesville Road on the West;
Cedar and Fenton Streets on the South;
Bonifant Street and Wayne Avenue on the East;
Franklin and Caroline Avenues on the North.

Welcome Letter Attached to This Newsletter

There is a welcome letter for all new residents in our neighborhood attached to this Newsletter.

Ellsworth Place Mall (formerly City Place) – And the Air Rights Above It – Sold for \$92 Million

Ellsworth Place Mall has been sold to GBT, and GBT plans to build 250,000 square feet of office space above it and to bring in new shops and amenities.

To learn more, go to bit.ly/EllsworthPlaceSale

Minutes of the May 9, 2018 Meeting

Michael Bufalini called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: David Hartmann gave the treasurer's report. There is a balance of \$10,007.23 in the checking account. Expenses during March and April included meeting room rental and newsletter publication totaling \$210.20. A total of \$160.78 was spent to provide hors d'oeuvres for the successful Happy Hour at Mrs. K's in March. There are not many new members this time of year; membership will pick up in the Fall.

Social Committee: The Social Committee would appreciate help with planning and working at the Block Party. Please contact Lynn Grodzki at lynngrodzki@gmail.com.

The Bill Kaupert bench is installed overlooking Sligo Creek near the tennis courts. It is in a beautiful location.

Purple Line: Erin Johanssen presented information from a previous night's meeting on the Purple Line. The next phase is that Bonifant Street will be shut down between Georgia Avenue and the Metro. They will be working on Wayne Avenue this summer, taking out all mature trees along the route. Utility work will mean that there will only be two lanes open. This work will continue until 2020. Please review the presentation for additional information at https://www.purplelinemd.com/images/public_involvement/community_advisory_teams/silver_spring/2018-05-07_Meeting_02/Silver%20Spring_CAT2_Final_7MAY2018.pdf

By-Law Task Force: Michael announced that due to IRS requirements for SOECA to register as a 501(c)(4)

civic association, the SOECA by-laws need to be rewritten. The Board is looking for help with this project. Please contact the board at soeca.board@gmail.com if you are willing to help.

SOECA Listserv: Michael said that he and Jonathan Bernstein were working on the transfer of the listserv from Yahoo to a new server.

Election of Officers: The election of new officers was held by a voice vote and all candidates were approved.

Featured Guests: The first speaker was Joy Patil, community service officer for the Montgomery County Police. She discussed crime trends during the summer months: bike thefts, thefts from vehicles, increase in burglaries. The police department offers a FREE home security survey to look at lights, doors, locks, and windows. Please call 240-773-6800 to arrange for someone to come to your home. They will make recommendations to keep you and your family safe.

240-773-6800 is the Police Non-Emergency number. If you see something while you're out, don't wait until you get home to call - call right away. If you don't have the non-emergency number handy, call 911 and they will connect you. It's better to report something and have a patrol car come out than not report a suspicious activity at all.

Two pamphlets were available to take home: Home Security, Safety Tips To Keep Your Home And Valuables Safe and Prevent Theft From Vehicles.

Joy said that the best thing to do when you go on vacation is NOT to stop the mail and newspapers. It is important to keep a regular routine. Have a neighbor park in your driveway and get your mail and newspapers. Keep a variety of lights on timers.

The next speaker was Keven Argueta, from the Patrol Investigation Unit. He said that theft from autos is becoming a huge trend. The perpetrators are different in different areas. There have been a couple arrests recently which help police to identify a trend. Occasionally car thefts turn into burglaries. Don't be hesitant to report a car theft, even if your car has only been rifled through and nothing taken. It helps the police to identify trends and patterns in a specific area. Don't leave items visible in cars - purse, computer, loose change. Car thefts happen frequently in

high traffic areas downtown, less in residential neighborhoods. Cars left during the day in parking garages are often targets.

Thefts in residential areas generally occur between midnight and 4:00am. Thefts from commercial areas and parking garages occur from 9:00am to 4:00pm. The criminals are not looking for a confrontation. Keep your outside lights on to discourage thefts.

Recently on Ellsworth Drive there was a group of three people going door to door trying to sell new roofing. The police call these people “woodchucks.” They solicit for home repairs, taking trees down, etc. Call the Police Non-Emergency number immediately. Don’t let them in the house for any reason, as they prey on vulnerable citizens. Give the police a description of the people and their vehicles.

Officer Patil said she would follow up with Lynn Bailes on any unanswered traffic safety questions.

The third speaker of the evening was Jason Starr, general manager of DC LimeBikes. He noted that the Town Hall meeting in January, when he was just new to the position, presented much criticism of the dockless bike program from businesses and residents. Since then, they have steadily made improvements by decreasing the fleet size, hiring additional staff just for Silver Spring, and planning for better response to weather events (like the wind storm in March). Their major concern continues to be Sligo Creek Park, as many bikes are picked up in the downtown area but then left in the park as people perhaps don’t like to ride back uphill. The GPS in each bike can show the location of that bike within 50 feet, so some bikes hidden in the park are not found right away.

The next phase of the pilot program (which has been extended to late August) is Montgomery County’s reaction to DC’s program as there are more positive experiences in the district. There is a culture change in the use of roadways - with bike lanes, etc. - and they feel that it is incumbent on them to use this time responsibly. He admitted that the entire program has been challenging and expected to hear negative comments from neighbors present at the meeting. Residents that want to write in support of-- or to express concerns with-- the dockless program generally or regarding availability of electric mobility options can reach out to Gary Erenrich at MCDOT: Gary.Erenrich@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Their staff continues to patrol on a daily basis. They would like to set up a restricted zone for drop-off, similar to how the National Park Service deals with bikes on the Mall. (You can ride through the Mall, but not park bikes on the Mall.)

The addition of electric scooters and electric bicycles in DC has been very popular. Jason explained that electric bikes have to be charged daily, so they are easier to manage and allow their business model to expand and revenue to increase. Other dockless bike companies (yellow, orange, etc) have no other products and to some extent have pulled out of Silver Spring. The capped amount of the number of bikes was never raised by the county so there was little room for growth. The model works for LimeBikes because they offer other products. They will stay flat in the number of pedal bikes they offer. The county is reticent to switch to electric bikes only or to set up “corrals” as designated places for multiple bikes.

LimeBikes continues to send out emails every month to users regarding parking instructions as well as instructional YouTube videos and instructions on their app. “A lot of people just aren’t kind,” he said, speaking of all of the poorly placed bikes around town.

Electric bikes are easier to use and fulfill more needs than do pedal bikes. A person gets physical activity which is more enjoyable and less work. They are heavy (78 lbs) and don’t tip over easily. They have to be handled daily to be charged. The charge is \$1.00 to start, then 15 cents a minute.

He said, anecdotally, that women in his wife’s office like the electric scooters because they can still wear dresses to work and arrive without breaking a sweat. He also said that they will be retrofitting their pedal bikes with a sturdier kickstand.

The annual percentage of loss and theft is 1% nationally, 3% in DC.

Jason said that they are working on a cash pay option for low income neighborhoods who have residents without credit cards. They want the program to be available to everyone who wants a bike or scooter.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Annual Membership Drive Begins Soon

SOECA’s annual membership campaign is held in October of each year. Flyers will be distributed with information about how to join SOECA. Please be on the lookout for your flyer.

Summertime in SOECA

The summer brought us glorious fireflies, a paw paw tree along the Creek and lush greenery. The Bill Kaupert bench was miraculously spared from a falling tree. Sligo Creek has benefitted from the raging rains, although the fierce water flow has carved out the banks even more. Looking ahead, with Purple Line construction underway on Wayne, help us protect Sligo Creek. If you see muddy runoff or other pollution coming from the purple line sites or the streets (especially in the rain), please send an email and photo to carla.julian@pltcllc.com. With our

intense storms, sometimes stormwater protections in place onsite just aren't enough.

Committee Chairs and Issue Representatives

- BRT CAT – Brian Feit
- Education Committee– Vacant
- Land Use – Chris Johansson
- Legislative Committee – Vacant
- Membership Committee – David Hartmann
- Montgomery County Civic Federation– Jean Cavanaugh
- Nominating Committee – Vacant
- Old Library Site – Steve Peck
- Purple Line CAT and Wayne Avenue Working Group – Erin Johansson
- Safety Committee – Lynn Bailes
- Silver Spring Citizens’ Advisory Board Representative – Jonathan Bernstein
- Social Committee– Lynn and Ted Grodzki
- Technology Committee – Jonathan Bernstein
- Traffic Committee – Jean Cavanaugh

Silver Spring Post Office Relocating to Silver Spring Library

By the time you receive this newsletter, the Silver Spring Post Office on 16th Street will have completed its move to the first floor of the Silver Spring Library at the corner of Fenton Street & Wayne Avenue.

The location at the Library is not permanent but the Post Office will likely be there for at least a year. There was a lively discussion about this topic on our listserv in July and here are some important points made by your neighbors:

- You can park in the Wayne Avenue public garage, and the first 30 minutes of parking is free. Just be sure to "punch" your parking ticket at the very first machine as soon as you return to the garage.
- There are standard blue mailboxes scattered throughout our neighborhood, including one at the corner of Pershing and Dale.
- If you are looking for a post office with onsite parking, the Woodmoor Post Office on University Boulevard is close by.

**SOECA Membership: Pay by Check or Paypal
Annual dues of \$20 per household or \$10 for seniors and single members**

- **PayPal:** from the “About” drop-down menu at www.soeca.org, select “Join SOECA” and follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.
- **Check:** make it payable to SOECA and send it with this form to: David Hartmann, SOECA Treasurer, 407 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Name: _____ **Today’s Date:** _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home _____ **Cell** _____ **Email** _____

Names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers are not shared.



Welcome to the Neighborhood!

You are living near restaurants, bars, theaters, cinemas, stores, and much more in the thriving area of downtown of Silver Spring. There's a metro station south of the downtown area; an urban park with a playground, tennis courts, and a dog park at the intersection of Ellsworth Drive and Springvale Road; and there are trails and playgrounds throughout Sligo Creek Park.

Join your neighbors for a happy hour at Mrs. K's Tollhouse on September 26 from 5 to 7pm. We'll be in the downstairs room. Please come meet your neighbors. And, SOECA's annual block party is Saturday October 27 from 3-7 PM (rain date Sunday October 28) on Bennington Drive, between Ellsworth Drive and Bennington Lane. Everyone is invited, adults, teens, kids and dogs on leashes. There will be a DJ, music, drinks, games, raffle prizes and a costume contest for kids and dogs. Please bring potluck food to share, books and plants to exchange, and invite your children (and your dogs) to dress up to compete for the funniest, scariest and cutest Halloween costumes. The raffle will feature prizes of interest to all.

There is a lot happening in and around neighborhood, and here are two of the major projects underway in our area:

- A two-year project (2017-2019) by WSSC to replace 2 miles of water mains underneath Colesville Road from its intersection with Georgia Avenue to the Beltway. Visit www.wsscwater.com/colesville to learn more about this work.
- A multiple-year project (2016-2022) to build a 16-mile light rail line from New Carrollton to Bethesda. SOECA residents will be served by stops on Wayne Avenue, the Silver Spring Library, and on Manchester Place. Visit www.purplelinemd.com for information about construction and operation of the rail line.

SOECA BENEFITS:

- ♦ Website at www.soeca.org
- ♦ Listserv
- ♦ Bi-monthly newsletter
- ♦ Regular membership meetings
- ♦ Social events
- ♦ Facebook page and Twitter account
- ♦ Committees, task forces, and project teams that are organized and run by your neighbors

Please consider joining SOECA. See the last page of the newsletter or go to www.soeca.org.