



January 2019 Issue

Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 26, from 3-5pm in the Cafeteria at Silver Spring International Middle School.

Upcoming 2019 SOECA Membership Meeting Dates

Meetings are at Silver Spring International Middle School (SSIMS) unless noted otherwise. Look for signs directing you to the SOECA meeting when you enter the building.

Saturday, January 26, 2019 from 3-5 PM in the Cafeteria of SSIMS

Wednesday, March 13, 2019 from 7-9 PM

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 from 7-9 PM

JANUARY MEETING:

“THE ENVIRONMENT: WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE THINGS IN OUR NECK OF THE WOODS?”

The theme of our January meeting is The Environment. Three presentations will be made on a range of environmental issues important to the neighborhood with the focus: what can we do? A group of our neighbors will brief us on a mosquito control plan they are hoping everyone will participate in; a speaker from Montgomery County’s Department of Environmental Protection will discuss the county’s RainScapes program; and Councilmember Tom Hucker will talk about our area’s environmental challenges and opportunities, his agenda to address them plus any concerns from the neighborhood. Following the presentations, we’ll have a pretty full business meeting. The agenda is in the column to the right of this article.

SOECA Mosquito Abatement Project (MAP) Committee

Last year, while we sprinted from car to front door in a fruitless attempt to evade the clouds of descending mosquitoes, our neighbors in Sligo Park Hills had remarkably few mosquitoes. Their secret? They took part in a successful citizen science experiment to reduce urban mosquitoes, led by Dr. Dina Fonseca at Rutgers University.

There is good evidence that this system significantly reduces mosquitoes through the use of inexpensive and pesticide-free traps. If you are like us and are dreaming of sitting outside with a glass of lemonade without swatting away disease-carrying mosquitoes, join the SOECA Mosquito Abatement Program (MAP)! Read on for details and sign up by sending your name, mailing address and email to cookpatton@gmail.com by February 15th.

Mosquitoes have become a health menace in recent years. Scientists at Rutgers University have developed a low cost, low maintenance approach to reducing urban mosquitoes. Nearby University Park and Mount Pleasant also tested the program last year. The traps are called GAT, or “gravid Aedes traps”, because they are especially good at capturing pregnant (gravid) female mosquitoes. Female

SOECA Officers

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

Notes from the SOECA Board

SOECA received an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS so that it can apply for tax exempt status as a membership association.

County Executive Leggett issued Executive Order 224-18, effective 11/20/18, directing that the Old Silver Spring Library site be leased to the Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center for a childcare center with space available for community use. This Executive Order is in keeping with SOECA’s official position adopted in March of 2018 on use of this site.

We contacted Councilmember Tom Hucker to get help/guidance on the standing water (often ice) on Dale Drive at Greenbriar and Ellsworth and at the intersection of Greenbriar and Woodside.

Agenda for January Meeting

1. Presentations:

- MAP Committee
- Ana Arriaza, Watershed Outreach Planner, for Montgomery County’s Department of Environmental Protection
- Councilmember Tom Hucker, Chair of Environment Committee

2. Business Meeting:

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes
- Treasurer’s Report
- Announcements and Committee Reports
- Volunteer Recognition
- Receive Report on Revised SOECA Bylaws

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.

mosquitoes are the ones that bite and if you can stop them from laying their eggs, you can keep the population from growing. The traps look like small plastic tubs with a dome, a little pool of water, some shreds of grass, and a piece of sticky fly paper. From a mosquito's perspective, it seems like a great place to lay eggs, but once inside, the fly paper catches the mosquito and a net keeps the mosquito eggs out of the water. A bit of Bti, which is a mosquito larvicide that only becomes active in an insect's gut is also encouraged as part of the trap system.

The traps cost about \$25-30 and on average we will need 2 traps per yard with more for larger lots. Minimal maintenance will include an occasional check to make sure they are in position, are properly set-up and draining excessive water following a storm. The more neighbors who join, the more successful we'll be. We are gathering interested names and then will help set up block captains to recruit neighbors, purchase and distribute the traps. For more information, check out BioQuip.com.

The SOECA MAP Committee members: Susan Cook-Patton, Karen Eaton, Karen Kuehl, and Carol Leventhal

Learn About RainScapes and How They Can Beautify Your Home, Help Local Wildlife, and Decrease Storm Water Runoff

We will hear from Ana Arriaza, Watershed Outreach Planner, for Montgomery County's Department of Environmental Protection. She will speak about rainscapes, which are a landscaping/design technique that helps reduce a home's stormwater runoff by capturing rainwater from hard surfaces (like driveways and roofs) and compacted lawns rather than having it flow unimpeded into our streets, stormdrains, and creeks.

Rainscaping includes a range of strategies from slowing down the movement of rain (conservation landscaping), to soaking up and storing rain for later release (rain gardens) to storing rain for long periods of time (cisterns). Most rainfall on urban surfaces ends up as stormwater runoff, causing erosion to streams, pollution and flooding. Montgomery County's RainScapes Program promotes the use of innovative techniques to reduce runoff and keep pollutants from entering our streams while beautifying neighborhoods, reducing local flooding and increasing desirable wildlife habitat.

Hear From Councilmember Tom Hucker and Discuss Your Environmental Concerns

Our newly-elected County Council is already at work. We are fortunate to receive a presentation by Councilmember Tom Hucker at the January meeting. Tom is the new Chairman of the Council's Transportation and the Environment (T&E) Committee. He would like to talk about his environmental agenda and also would like to hear our concerns.

Among the many things he is doing for us, he is helping us fix the standing water drainage and ice problems on Dale Drive and has been instrumental in balancing safety needs and environmental concerns in road salting after last March's salt dumps throughout our neighborhood. He has also helped us protect Sligo Creek on many occasions, and is a champion of strong storm water management.

SOECA's GOVERNANCE AND BYLAWS

Those attending the SOECA block party in October may have heard that SOECA was able to offset most of the cost of that event with the help of a generous grant from the county. In order to receive that grant, SOECA had to have a valid not-for-profit tax ID from the state. As a part of that process, the SOECA Executive Committee realized that the SOECA could benefit from incorporating as a 501(c)4 non-profit membership organization (as many other local civic groups recently have). And in order to complete the incorporation, our organizational bylaws must be up-to-date. This process has provided an opportunity to ensure that our paperwork and governance structures are in proper working order.

The SOECA bylaws, first written in 1968, have been revised only twice—in 1975 and 2001. They currently contain several formal requirements that don't match the reality of how the organization functions. As such, the Executive Committee has undertaken a rewrite of the bylaws aimed at streamlining and clarifying required processes without substantially changing the way SOECA operates. With guidance from SOECA Vice President Onuka Ibe, who advises nonprofits on governance issues professionally, the Executive Committee has prepared several amendments to the bylaws. These will be presented and distributed at the January SOECA membership meeting and will be voted upon at the March membership meeting.

Most importantly, our dues structure, membership requirements, and membership voting structure are completely unchanged from the previous bylaws. Substantive changes include:

- Updating the fiscal year to match the articles of incorporation,
- Leaving open the possibility of delivering the SOECA newsletter electronically, rather than physically, in the future (there are no plans to make that change, at present),
- Clarifying the roles of the various officers and streamlining the nominations process before officer elections,
- Eliminating specific (and outdated) requirements about the number and timing of meetings and a number of "standing committees" (we are not

creating or eliminating any committees, just removing mention of particular committees from the bylaws to allow the officers more flexibility to align committees with current needs), and

- Altering the language around making amendments to the bylaws in order to allow us to vote on all the changes at once, rather than having to vote on each Article's changes individually.

The text of these proposed amendments will be made available via the Listserv, January newsletter, website, Facebook page, and in print at the January and March meetings. If you have any questions about the proposed changes, feel free to contact the Executive Committee at soeca.board@gmail.com.

TRAFFIC ISSUES IN AND AROUND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Contact soecatrafic@gmail.com for more information about these projects:

WSSC work on Dale Drive is completed, but water pipe replacement continues along Colesville Rd. WSSC expects to complete replacement of 1.88 miles of water transmission pipes from Georgia Ave. to the Beltway by Spring of 2019. Crews work from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm and Saturdays, weather permitting. There have been traffic backups during these hours, so best to check online maps and avoid the area. To learn more about the project, see

<https://www.wsscwater.com/Colesville>

PEPCO capacity expansion and reliability work affecting Georgia Ave. in Silver Spring CBD and areas west started in November 2018 and runs through March 2021. See <https://www.pepco.com/SmartEnergy/ReliabilityImprovements/Pages/Sligo-to-Linden-Underground-Line.aspx>

Bus Rapid Transit project for Route 29 broke ground on October 25, 2018. You can read in general about the goals of BRT at <https://www.flashbtr.com>. Neighbor Brian Feit represents SOECA on the Corridor Advisory Committee. For details, <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/BRT/us29south.html>

Montgomery County Vision Zero has new emphasis and energy, as pedestrian and cyclist accidents and deaths have risen lately. <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/vision-zero/>. There is also a Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee that meets the fourth Thursday of every month at the Executive Office Building in Rockville. Meetings are open to the public. https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/PBTSAC/PBTSAC_History.html

There is also an effort by members of our Montgomery County delegation to Annapolis to reduce the speed limit of state highways through business districts, like downtown Silver Spring, to 25 mph.

Governor Hogan is pursuing a study to add toll lanes to the Beltway and I-270 in Maryland utilizing a public-private partnership (P3) in order to design, construct, operate and

maintain any proposed infrastructure improvements. The Managed Lanes Study will evaluate a range of alternatives to develop a travel demand management solution that addresses congestion, improves trip reliability and enhances existing and planned multimodal mobility and connectivity. The project is fast tracked, with the state planning to select the preferred option by the spring of 2019. For more information, see:

Maryland Department of Transportation <https://495-270-p3.com> and Montgomery Planning Board <http://montgomeryplanningboard.org/i-495-and-i-270-managed-lanes-study/>

WE KNEW WE HAD A LOT OF RAIN!

(edited for brevity and reprinted from SOECA Listserv announcements)

CoCoRaHS.org (Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow Network), the citizen precipitation reporting group has set up reports for their "Water Year" that starts and ends October 1 for individual stations.

For a station near SOECA: the average is 42.99. This year the total was 63.39. If you look at the measurement from January 1 through December 15, we have a total of 72.47" for the year (as reported by Kit Gage of Friends of Sligo Creek).

PURPLE LINE WORK TO INCREASE IN COMING WEEKS

Erin Johansson, SOECA's Representative to the Purpose Line Community Advisory Team, reports that Purple Line construction along Wayne, specifically managing utilities, is expected to ramp up in the coming months. This will involve periodic closures of the sidewalks on Wayne as well as the crosswalk at Wayne and Sligo Creek Parkway. The current plan when that intersection is closed to pedestrians is to place a short-term crosswalk on Wayne between Mansfield and Sligo Creek Parkway. A number of Community Advisory Team members raised the dangers of such a plan, so they are reexamining it. Walkers released from Sligo Creek Elementary and SSIMS will also be impacted by the sidewalk closures at Wayne and Dale. Those of us from the Wayne Avenue Working Group are staying on top of these concerns.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2018 MEETING

Meeting agenda and minutes of last meeting approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's report: Michael Bufalini gave the Treasurer's Report in David Hartmann's absence. SOECA has \$9,923.74 in its coffers.

Safety Committee Report: Lynn Bailes reported all quiet on the SOECA front. Hoping to have a police representative speak at one of our next meetings.

Future special guest: Michael Bufalini announced that Councilman Hucker has been invited to join SOECA at its next membership meeting.

BRT Report: Brian Felt reported that the BRT planners will be announcing where the stops will be. Brian stated that with regard to the impact of the BRT on our community, the downgrading of Dale Drive from a major artery to a minor artery was very beneficial. The same is true of the bike paths that have narrowed car passageways on Colesville Road, Cedar Street, and Spring Street.

Chris Reynolds noted that the Coalition Against Beltway Expansion (CABE) is back in action and seeking volunteers via its Facebook site.

Coming Events: Michael Bufalini noted that SOECA's Happy Hour will be happening on September 26 in Mrs. K's, and the Block Party will occur on October 27.

Other news: Michael Bufalini noted that Ellsworth Place Mall has been sold. The new owners plan to develop office space above City Place.

Redevelopment of old Silver Spring Library: Steve Peck noted that there was no new library news.

New Business: Michael Bufalini noted that a Bylaws Committee has been formed with the intention of updating SOECA's bylaws consistent with a new tax identification number SOECA will be obtaining. Michael Gurwitz volunteered to be on the committee.

A new resident sat in on the meeting to learn more about SOECA.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.

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

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE UNDERWAY

Our annual membership drive is underway. Please join SOECA to help support our 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.

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** _____

Resident email addresses and home addresses are not shared.

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

Want to enjoy your yard in the summer without swarms of mosquitoes? Our neighbors in Sligo Park Hills found a way to significantly reduce mosquitoes using inexpensive, low maintenance and pesticide-free traps. We would like to pilot a similar project in SOECA. These traps called GAT, or “gravid Aedes traps”, are especially good at capturing pregnant (gravid) female mosquitoes. Females mosquitoes are the ones that bite and if you can stop them from laying their eggs, you can keep the population from growing. The traps look like small plastic tubs with a dome, a little pool of water, some shreds of grass, and a piece of sticky fly paper. A bit of Bti, which is a larvicide that becomes active in an insect’s gut with mainstream research suggesting it does not affect your, your kid’s or your pet’s gut. It is also encouraged as an extra precaution since there is a pool of water inside the GAT. Holes at the bottom of the trap drain off water but you would need to monitor and pour off excess following a rain storm. Traps cost about \$25 and on average, our SOECA neighbors will need 2 traps per yard with more for larger lots. If you are interested, please send your name, mailing address and email to cookpatton@gmail.com by February 15th. We are gathering interested names and then will help set up “nodes” or neighborhood captains to recruit neighbors, purchase and distribute the traps. The more neighbors who join, the more successful we’ll be!

