

SOECA MEETING MINUTES: September 11th, 2019

Prepared by Claire Zietz

Meeting agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

Minutes of last meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report: Balance in the checking account is \$9,454.06. Expenses during May through August were \$351.89 for the May newsletter, room rental, gifts to outgoing officers, Quickbooks license; \$138.25 for printing for the flyers for the joint meeting with Park Hills on Wayne Ave Safety. The Treasurer's Report was approved by unanimous vote.

Announcements:

- Jean Cavanaugh: Spoke of the construction on Sligo Creek Parkway where the Dept of Transportation has been working to improve runoff and pedestrian safety with speed tables and restriping. The work is in progress and could be finished within two weeks.
- David Hartmann: Briefed the group on the Social Committee's plans for the upcoming Autumn Block Party on Saturday October 26th, with more details to come in the flyer that will be distributed in October, as well as on the listserv and SOECA's social media. In addition, flyers will be distributed as reminder to renew membership to SOECA.

New Business/Committee Reports: There was no new business or reports.

Speakers

TOPIC: SLIGO CREEK

Anne Vorce, SOECA resident and representative of Friends of Sligo Creek, Water Watchdog Co-Founder.

Anne spoke of her personal experiences of living in SOECA and why she became involved with local water quality and the impact of the local Anacostia watershed from Sligo Creek in our area and neighborhood.

Anne spoke about the organization Friends of Sligo Creek and shared upcoming meeting dates. As it is a volunteer-led organization, she noted that volunteers are encouraged, all are welcome, and it is a helpful program especially for budding young scientists and community service hours. They work with the Parks Program, Three Oaks, and other organizations, lead a cleanup twice a year, a weed-warrior program, fall bird walks, and more. Visit www.fosc.org for more information on how to help and upcoming events.

Anne encouraged everyone to report any pollutants/trash/sediment/etc or questions to ReportSligoPollution@fosc.org, also to call the Park Police after 5pm or on a weekend at 301-949-3010.

A Question and Answer session followed.

TOPIC: DEVELOPMENTS TO DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING

Elza Hisel-McCoy, Area 1 Chief of Montgomery County Planning Dept, and team.

Elza spoke about the Planning Department areas of oversight, noting that his team reviews development applications and prepares master plans for parts of the county.

Elza walked the attendees through the online system at www.Montgomeryplanning.org where one can find application materials online, searchable by name and number or via map search. Summaries, drawings, resolutions, and staff reports are all accessible.

Some examples of current projects were mentioned: the Discovery building (now Inventa Towers) has a new landscape design which went before the board this past summer and are anticipated to reposition as an office building, Silver Spring CBD plan will start next winter/spring when the zoning plan will be revisited for the first time since the 1990s, the update of the Ellsworth DTSS initiative has been in talks about the redesign but no application has been submitted.

A Question and Answer session followed regarding the need for more parking garages in DTSS, the status of the old Library on Colesville Road, and the new daycare Centronia (the Gudelsky real estate developers plan), the hotel project at Georgia and Colesville, City Place, and upcoming Purple Line impacts.

Reemberto Rodriquez, Director of the Silver Spring Regional Center, offered to take a group from SOECA on a walk to discuss upcoming projects.

Elza encourage anyone to contact him with further questions: elza.hisel-mccoy@montgmoeryplanning.org, 301-495-2115.

TOPIC: DOWNTOWN SIVER SPRING RENOVATIONS AT ELLSWORTH

Kelly Price, Vice President, Retail Asset Management for Peterson Companies, and team.

Kelly and her team gave a presentation on what the Peterson Companies has planned. They were responsible for the original development and own a number of those properties. The current plans are to do a \$10 million refresh of the area, starting with painting the building facades, which has already begun, and creating and placing four large murals in the downtown area.

The goal of the project is to create a gathering space along Ellsworth with furniture, games, and work stations. The outside elevator will be removed due to weather problems and it will be moved inside. New stores and companies will open such as The Eleanor duckpin bowling. Gateway Plaza (where Panera is located) will also receive updates and a redesign. The parking lot of Whole Foods will become a right-in-right-out entry on Wayne, with a left turn to be possible from Fenton. That current one-way out exit will become an entry. They hope the updates will be completed by the end of next year.

A Question and Answer session followed about the parking lots of Panera and Whole Foods, with neighbors asking for more attention to be paid to safe pedestrian access, especially entering the Whole Foods lot from Pershing Drive. Concerns were voiced about environmental implications of the material that will be used for the greenspace proposed on Ellsworth, which was determined to not be Astroturf. The farmers' market will still be held in the same location after the update.

For more information, Kelly may be contacted at kprice@petersoncos.com or 703-227-0889.

To note: more information is also available online at www.downtownsilverspring.com/refresh-coming-soon

Reemberto stayed for one-on-one questions.

Michael Bufalini noted that the next meeting will be on a Tuesday.

There being no further business, Mr. Bufalini adjourned the meeting at 8:46pm.
