



# Civic Federation News

October 2010

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## October Program—Bicycling

The program for our October 11 meeting will be on Bicycling in Montgomery County: The Next Big Thing in Personal Transportation. Our speakers will be Casey Anderson and Richard Layman.

Casey Anderson is a former newspaper reporter and congressional staffer who now works as a lawyer and partner at Kaufman/Anderson, a jury consulting firm. Casey rediscovered bicycling as he was approaching middle age, and quickly realized that bicycling infrastructure in the Washington suburbs leaves a great deal to be desired. With the zeal of a convert, he became active in bike advocacy in Montgomery County and developed a strong interest in the relationship between land use and transportation planning. He chairs the Washington Area Bicyclist Association's (WABA) advocacy committee and is responsible for ongoing opinion research project on attitudes toward bicycling among both cyclists and non-cyclists. Casey is a slow but steady bike commuter, and he also enjoys mountain biking.

Richard Layman is an urban revitalization and transportation planner and advocate. He has been a bicycle commuter for 20 years and is known for writing the national revitalization blog, "Rebuilding Place in the Urban Space." Recently, he served as the bicycle and pedestrian planner for Baltimore County, Maryland, a suburban jurisdiction with 830,000 residents, facing the challenge of integrating sustainable transportation modes within the framework of a rural road legacy and a route network based on connections emanating from Baltimore City [editor's note- sounds a lot like Montgomery County, doesn't it?]. Currently, he works as Director of Business Development and Community Engagement for BicyclePASS LLC ([www.bicyclepass.com](http://www.bicyclepass.com)), a bicycle facilities and systems integration firm focused on deploying and implementing innovative parking, sharing, and electric bike-based solutions in communities across the U.S.

This program will focus on why and how Montgomery County should take bicycling more seriously as a solution to a variety of transportation problems, and on the factors that lead people to consider bicycling as an appealing transportation option -- or not -- in our area. As always, our meeting and program are open to the public, and we leave time for discussion and Q&A with our presenters.

A second, follow-on program is planned for this winter when representatives from MNCPPC and the County's DOT will discuss both planning and the implementation of the bicycle infrastructure and amenities needed to promote and encourage biking as a safe, healthy and pleasant method of personal transportation.

## President's Message By Peggy Dennis, MCCF President

The school I attended in Princeton, N.J. had a parking lot for teachers flanked on the longest side by a 200 foot long "bike shed". Because we had no school buses and because so many students lived within a mile or two of the school, on days when it wasn't raining or snowing, the bike shed was packed. Parents gave their children the responsibility (and freedom) of getting to school by foot or bike. Most of us loved this option and bicycled safely back and forth. We also bicycled along Nassau Street and around the town with the thousands of Princeton students who used bicycles to get everywhere, on and off campus. Juxtapose this to the fact that the principals at a number of the Montgomery County Public Schools prohibit students from coming to school on bikes!

My bicycle went with me to Smith College where almost every student used a bike to get quickly around campus or to ride down into Northampton for shopping, pizza or a movie. Bikes were so ubiquitous that no one even owned locks. Naturally, when I moved west to UCLA for graduate school, my bike went with me and served me just as well, although I believe I was the only person in west LA on two wheels.

When I married, moved to Silver Spring and joined the Foreign Service, I found myself in the rare minority who bicycled to work at the State Department. My husband and I would drive down Rock Creek, park at Pierce Mill, and cycle the rest of the way to our respective jobs. When we moved to West Bethesda, the commute by

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bicycle shifted to the tow path along the C&O Canal and the Potomac River. Our two year assignment in London was more challenging. When weather permitted, we cycled the 8 miles from East Finchley up over Hampstead Heath and down the other side to the Embassy in Grosvenor Square. We arrived invigorated, having avoided being stuck in the gridlocked traffic or on the crowded “tube”. To this day, my husband still cycles part way to work whenever weather permits and arrives back home stressed out and grumpy when he has to drive the full trip.

Last summer my husband, his brother and sister-in-law and I spent a wonderful week together cycling the length of the C&O Canal. It reminded me what an outstanding form of transportation the bicycle is and how overlooked and underutilized it has become in the modern American society and economy. One has only to visit Amsterdam to see how effectively bicycles can be incorporated into the urban and suburban transportation system, how they have become an accepted, respected and cherished way of life.

The District is adding more bike lanes to designated streets to encourage safe bicycle commuting, and it has built a large bicycle parking garage at Union Station. On September 21, Washington and Arlington County inaugurated Capital Bikeshare, the largest bike sharing program in the United States with 1,100 bikes at 100 kiosks in the District and Northern Virginia. This will enable people to ride transit into the District then move about easily and cost-effectively by bike.

There are changes needed in Montgomery County’s “bicycle infrastructure”, changes in the laws governing the use and sharing of roads, and changes in personal habits and mindset that need to take place before many will start buying bicycles and using them for personal transportation. With these needs in mind, I joined the Washington Area Bicyclist Association to learn more about the state of bicycling in Montgomery County and the whole area of bicycling advocacy and activism. For those whose interest is piqued by the October program, I offer the following websites for more information:

- Washington Area Bicyclist Association:  
[www.waba.org](http://www.waba.org)
- Montgomery Bicycle Advocates: [www.mobike.org](http://www.mobike.org)
- Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group (MCBAG) – Bikeway Coordinator, Gail Tait-Nouri in the Department of Transportation, works with bike advocates at monthly meetings: <http://bit.ly/mocobag>
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments – planning for greater integration of pedestrians and bicyclists into the transportation mix.  
<http://bit.ly/b8ZAJy>

- [www.BikeMapProject.org](http://www.BikeMapProject.org) – a collaborative map for cyclists and by cyclists

## Membership

We extend a warm welcome to our new member associations:

Kenwood Condominiums  
Manor Lake Civic Association  
McKenney Hills Carroll Knolls Civic Assn.  
South Bradley Hills Neighborhood Assn.  
Twinbrook Citizens Association

and to our new individual associate members:

Jennifer Fajman  
Beverly Sobel  
Maria Stephens  
Evan Stephens  
Joan Snow

### Please Renew Your Membership

If you or your association is listed below, it means that we have not yet (at time of printing) received your dues for the current year. Please print out the Membership Form on page 11, complete it and mail it in to Bill Schrader with the check (from your treasurer) as soon as possible. We appreciate your cooperation.

Allanwood-Gayfields-Willson Hills-Gaywood Estates (AGWG) Civic Association, Inc.  
Bannockburn Civic Association  
Bradley Boulevard Citizen Association  
Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association  
Congressional Forest Community Association  
Deerfield Weathered Oak Citizens Association  
Edgemoor Citizens Association  
Flower Valley Citizens Assn  
Garrett Park Estates-White Flint Park Citizens Assn  
Greater Glenmont Civic Assn  
Greater Olney Civic Association  
Kensington Heights Citizens Association  
Kensington View Civic Association  
Kentlands Citizens' Assembly  
North White Oak Civic Association  
Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association  
Parkwood Residents Association  
Randolph Civic Association, Inc.  
Regency Estates Citizens Association  
Seven Oaks-Evanswood Citizens Association  
Snowdens Mill Homeowners Assoc  
South Four Corners Citizens Assn.  
South Tuckerman-Inverness Citizens Association  
Tilden Woods Citizens Association  
Town of Somerset

Tulip Hill Citizens Association  
 West Montgomery County Citizens Association  
 Wheaton Citizens Coalition  
 Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association  
 Wildwood Manor Citizens Association  
 Woodmoor Pinecrest Citizens Assn  
 Action Committee for Transit  
 Audubon Naturalist Society  
 Montgomery County Taxpayers League

Diana Conway	Robert Monsheimen
Julie Davis	Drew Powell
Jenny Sue Dunner	Stan Schiff
Cynthia Fain	Dick Strombotne
Agnes Jones Trower	Dale Tibbitts
Caren & Eric Madsen	

## Awards Banquet Venue – Suggestions, Anyone?

Our 2010 Awards Banquet, held for the first time at the Universities at Shade Grove Conference Center, was a great success. It was nice to try out a new venue and their catering staff. Now, it's time to think about next year. We need to book our venue for the 2011 Awards Banquet as soon as possible. We can go back to New Fortune, or return to USGCC. But if you have a suggestion for a new location – restaurant, conference center, recreation center, whatever – now is the time to tell us. The venue must be able to accommodate at least 130 people and provide a banquet dinner for around \$25/person or allow an independent caterer to be hired. If you have a suggestion, please contact your MCCF president at 301-983-9738.

## Education Committee Report By Paula Bienenfeld, Chairman

### Update on the Pearson Contract

The Board of Education (BOE) signed a contract on June 8 with Pearson, an international media company, to develop an 'integrated' and online curriculum. Pearson will market the curriculum and MCPS will receive up to 3% in royalties. According to the contract, (i) Pearson "shall be able to use MCPS's name, marks, logos, and other indicia on the Program to identify MCPS as one of the authors of the Program; and (ii), Publisher may use MCPS Marks in connection with advertising, promotion, and sale of the program." . To read the entire contract, go to <http://scr.bi/mcps-pearson> . I asked Brian Edwards, Chief of Staff, MCPS, and one of the project managers of the contract for a copy of the "Program Development

Plan" which was due as a deliverable 14 days after the contract was signed. As of this time, the "Program Development Plan" is still incomplete and unavailable.

### Federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grant Application

In April, MCPS informed the Board of Education that they had submitted a grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to create two magnet schools. Watkins Mill High School would become an "International Baccalaureate School of Engineering, Digital Design, and Performing Arts." Wheaton High School and the co-located Thomas Edison High School of Technology would be merged to create a "high tech high school." Thomas Edison HS currently offers 19 programs in Vocational Education including cosmetology, plumbing, hospitality, and carpentry. It provides a supportive learning environment for students with learning disabilities and career training for students who do not plan to attend college. It is unclear what will happen to the VocEd programs at Edison if this plan is implemented. MCPS apparently did not contact the Special Education community about this proposal.

As a sidebar, the grant includes a 'Voluntary Desegregation Plan' as was required by the Department of Education upon submittal of the grant proposal. According to the grant proposal, students would be admitted to each school by a "race-neutral lottery system"

### Choosing a New Superintendent

MCPS Superintendent Jerry Weast will retire effective June 30th, 2011. In a memo dated September 16th, 2010, Patricia O'Neill, BOE President, laid out a timeline for choosing the new superintendent. An 'ad hoc' committee consisting of Ms. O'Neill, Board members Christopher Barclay and Philip Kauffman and Ikhide Roland Ikheloa, the Board's Chief of Staff, will start this effort by issuing a Request for Proposals to education search firms, by September 20th, 2010, with the closing date for submittals of proposals by October 22nd. The memo also discussed the possibility of choosing a superintendent "from a non-traditional background." The committee will review the submitted proposals and choose a search firm by December 2010. The Board then plans an offsite retreat with the selected firm. These retreats are open to the public, however usually no notes or minutes are taken and they are not broadcast, as are the regular BOE meetings.

What would you like to see in a new superintendent? What concerns you about MCPS? Make sure your voice is heard. The superintendent of MCPS manages not only the county's public education system – he or she will also manage 57% of our entire county budget. And,

remember that MCPS is an independent agency, so there is little county or state oversight, or enforcement, of any financial audits.

The entire BOE memo, timeline for the superintendent search, and proposed Request for Proposal is at <http://scr.bi/mcpsupsrch>.

### **Budget Discussions in October**

Please remember that the BOE is holding roundtable discussions regarding the upcoming MCPS budget. To sign up for the roundtables, call 301-279-3617, beginning three weeks before the forum -- i.e., now! The roundtables will be held as follows:

October 13 at Carver Educational Services Center, Auditorium, Rockville, 7–9 p.m.

October 28 at Wheaton High School, Silver Spring, 7–9 p.m.

### **Oh, County Budget! By Chuck Lapinski, Public Finance and Utilities Chair**

So what finally happened? Our FY 2011-2012 Operating Budget started out last fall with an eye popping \$100-200 million deficit. By the time the budget went to press in March, the deficit had grown to about \$779 million. This was followed by many memo revisions from the Exec to the Council based on multiple revised revenue projections from the state and gut wrenching warnings from the bond rating agencies. The following is my simplified interpretation of what I read in Rockville.

[Note. most of the rating assessments are copyrighted and are not available for open distribution] Moody's was the most devastating as it "placed the County's AAA general obligation rating on review for downgrade" then threw salt into the wound by outlining three stipulations that should be addressed/corrected in the budget process if we want to maintain our very desirable AAA bond rating in the future. Fitch and Standard & Poors had similar concerns, but seemed a little more practical in expressing that we should revise the budget consistent with their somewhat more "flexible" wording. Nobody knows where these rating agencies were two years ago, nor when they suddenly got fiscal religion! But the points in the three rating assessments were not arguable. The total projected budget deficit had suddenly grown from the original \$100 million to almost \$1 billion! The deficit solutions - the messy making of the "sausage" as it were - really affect every person and entity in the county.

To their credit, the Executive and Council (and their staffs as well!) were forced to make some really tough choices. The solution(s) may only be good for the next

fiscal year. They combine a two-pronged approach: raising some taxes/fees and lowering some costs.

The combined increase on excise taxes on energy and communications was originally supposed to hit commercial users harder than residential consumers. Thanks to some really aggressive lobbying (bullying?) by the Chamber of Commerce and related groups, this has now been reversed, so residential users will be paying about 75% and businesses 25% more on their energy and communications "fees". The fact that these significantly increased fees will not be deductible on tax returns will further impact our monthly energy and communications bills and may come back to haunt our elected officials in the future. Costs were lowered by furloughing government workers and clawing back contractually obligated cost-of-living increases – both anathema to the various public employee unions

For the first time since I've been analyzing and assessing the budgets, I think there is an individual and collective Exec and Council realization that we have a really serious structural budget/revenue problem; a problem that is not likely to go away easily, nor soon. Also to its credit, the Council closed the fiscal year by finally developing and adopting its first balanced Montgomery County Six-year Fiscal Plan, based on some almost realistic revenue projections in the 1.4% to 2.9% growth range. It is a simple model but one that will help to show the impact of all budget puts and takes on the current year and ripple effects on future fiscal years. This could help keep us from "kicking the can down the street" again and again! The first time I saw this technique discussed and recommended was when I was a member of the first Commission on the Future of Montgomery County and its Fiscal Affairs Committee during the 1985-1987 timeframe! I believe our present woes would have been significantly less if this recommendation had been taken up and enacted 25 years ago?

In the meantime, what does preserving our AAA bond rating buy us? On the last \$325 million bond issue, it will save us approximately \$8 million over its 20 year life. Since the mid-seventies it has meant over a half a billion dollars saved according to County's Office of Management and Budget. And, that is NOT "chopped meat." And more importantly, we continue to have nearly immediate access to the bond markets at very favorable rates!

So what is on the horizon? Steve Farber will report to the Council on Tuesday, Sept. 28 that the economic news will not get better any time soon. Is it time to finally establish some equitable and cogent economic principles and tough discipline? This will be difficult to

accomplish, but I think it is possible to do it better and do it right. Do we collectively have the intestinal fortitude? Remains to be seen!

Simply put, our county government and its budget is unaffordable, and the extent of its unaffordability was covered up by the ever increasing revenues provided by the boom years from 2003 through 2007. The situation at the state level is no better, and I am concerned because the state has punted on its budget responsibility for the last 2-3 years. To its credit, the state legislature did more to correct the imbalance presented in the original budget. But it is too easy for the state to push its burdens onto the counties and independent jurisdictions as a quick solution. There is unlikely to be anymore “manna” from Washington to help cover over the real depth and breadth of our fiscal problems as has been done for many years.

## **Hotel Tax Exemption for Lockheed Martin?**

**by Jim Zepp**

The Montgomery County Council is considering legislation - Bill 44-10 - that would exempt “any corporate hotel or other lodging facilities solely operated for in-house purposes from the County’s 7% transient tax”. At this time, Lockheed Martin Corporation is the sole company in the County that would benefit from this bill. It has a 183 room hotel located in Bethesda known as the Center for Leadership Excellence. The justification for this bill is that the corporation would be more competitive in bidding for contracts offered by the federal government. The exemption, however, would not be restricted only to lodging related to the company’s federal contracts; it would include employees, contractors, vendors, and anyone else invited by the company; and would apply retroactively to taxes incurred after July 1, 2010. It is estimated that passage of this bill would result in an estimated annual revenue loss to the County of \$450,000. Good for Lockheed Martin; bad for the taxpayers of Montgomery County!

For the following reasons, this legislation should be rejected by the County Council.

1. At this time when Montgomery County and the State of Maryland are facing dire fiscal challenges, it is egregiously inappropriate to grant tax exemptions that unfairly benefit one corporation while increasing the tax burden imposed on all other County businesses and citizens contributing to the decline in government services by substantially reducing future tax revenues, and fostering the image of County government yielding to special interests.
2. The justification that granting this tax exemption will make this particular corporation more competitive for bidding on Federal contracts is based on questionable logic, while also disadvantaging other County businesses that also compete for contracts and customers. In 2009, Lockheed Martin Corporation had \$45 billion in total revenues and \$3 billion in earnings. It was ranked first among Washington Technology magazine’s 2010 list of top 100 government contractors with \$16.7 billion in prime government contracts. The estimated savings (\$450,000) of this tax exemption would be 0.0027% of the value of its federal contracts. This percentage would be applicable only if the entire hotel facility was solely devoted to activities related to federal contracts, which is unlikely since this segment represents only a third of the company’s total revenues.
3. Conversely, applying this reasoning could set a terrible precedent and justify exempting all such potential government contractors, and even all other businesses in the County from taxes, fees, and regulations since this would also give them a similar competitive advantage. However, it would be an unsound public and fiscal policy to do so.
4. Simply because a corporation is large enough to afford its own hotel is no reason to grant an exemption from a tax that all other companies must pay when using hotels for similar purposes. This unfairly places the tax burden on smaller, less powerful companies and individuals.
5. Because this is a blanket tax exemption that would apply not only for lodging of the corporation’s employees but also any contractors and vendors doing business with it, business invitees, and apparently anyone else with a relationship to the company, this exemption would confer a competitive advantage over other hotels and lodging facilities in the County, which could result in a reduction of customers for them. It would be understandable if these businesses responded by demanding their own exemption from the transient tax, rendering it useless for generating revenues for the County.
6. If the purpose is to encourage the competitiveness of businesses located in Montgomery County, the estimated cost of this exemption (\$450,000) would have far greater impact by assisting and improving the business climate for small to medium size companies. This would be good economic policy because the majority of job growth occurs in these smaller businesses, which are also more likely to stay in the County as they expand.

The Council held a public hearing for Bill 44-10 on Tuesday, Sept. 21st at which several County residents, citizens groups, and two state legislators expressed their opposition. It was referred to the Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) Committee, which is expected to review the bill at 10:00 AM on Oct. 4th. If passed, the bill will then be submitted for a vote by the full Council.

If you share my concern that this bill should not be passed, please email, write or call the Councilmembers on the MFP Committee (Duchy Trachtenberg, Chair, Nancy Navarro, Valerie Ervin) or any/all members of the Council. Full contact information is on the Council's website: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council).

## About Panhandling by Sue Kirk, Bethesda Cares

*(Editor's note: At various time we have discussed the issue of people panhandling along our roadsides or in the median strips. We have discussed asking the County Council to enact legislation prohibiting this activity, both for the safety of those asking for money and, I think, because the visibility of beggars makes us feel uncomfortable. With this still unresolved issue in mind, we reprint the following article from Bethesda Cares, and we will have a stack of their drop cards (information cards to hand to panhandlers in lieu of cash) available at the October meeting.)*

Have you ever been approached and asked if you could spare some change? Asked if you could help someone get some food to eat? Asked for bus money? Many of us give change if we have it, give change because we feel sorry for the person, give change because we feel guilty or because we want to help the person. Have you ever felt frustrated, disappointed or sad when you see the same person asking for money day in and day out? How is the spare change really helping? Is giving to panhandlers the answer?

Our experience at Bethesda Cares is that panhandling is not the answer and here are some reasons why: panhandling doesn't provide benefits like insurance, it is not steady or reliable income, it creates a dependence on others, and is a cycle that is hard to break even if someone doesn't intend to do it very long. Panhandling often goes to feeding an addiction be it gambling, alcohol or drugs. It diminishes the dignity of the individual.

Giving change to panhandlers does not solve the problems the person is facing and can often prolong the problem. We don't know what people need just from looking at them. Someone asking for some change may need food, may need housing, an addictions program, counseling, health care, clothing, and the list goes on and

on. Panhandling is the symptom; to address it we need to know the individual. Usually the person panhandling isn't addressing these issues. At Bethesda Cares, we work together with the homeless to address their problems and seek solutions to move them toward stability.

What is the answer? Sadly, there is no easy answer, but there are ways of giving that can help move people in the direction of stability. The first is, don't give money. If you want to give to the individual, consider buying food or coffee. There are wallet size drop cards available from Bethesda Cares that give the homeless information on where to get food and services. Drop this in the cup instead of change. Then make a contribution to one or more of the agencies that work with the homeless, learn about the issues and help advocate for change. Volunteer your time with one of the agencies, contact the Montgomery County Volunteer and Community Service Center to find the match for your time and talents. In this way you will truly be giving a hand up--not a hand out.

As an outreach program for the homeless, we go out on the street to meet clients. Call us if you are concerned about an individual. Also, we are available to come to your office to speak to your staff about panhandling, responsible giving and working safely.

Contact Sue Kirk at 301 907 9244.

## Upcoming Conservation Montgomery Community Strolls By Caren Madsen, Environment Co-Chair

**Northwest Branch Family Nature Stroll**  
Saturday, October 23 • 9:30am - 11:00am

Join Conservation Montgomery for a family nature walk along a trail within this local watershed. The Northwest Branch includes portions of the communities of Norwood, Bel Pre Manor, Colesville, Layhill, Glenmont, Wheaton, Hillandale, White Oak, Silver Spring, Kemp Mill, Four Corners and Takoma Park. The majority of the Northwest Branch stream valley is a riparian buffer, protected as parkland by the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. The group will meet at the Kemp Mill trail head a few hundred feet south of the Glen Allen Ave. intersection with Kemp Mill Road. Look for the Conservation Montgomery banner and gather there.

**Blockhouse Point Conservation Park  
Community Stroll**  
Saturday, November 20th, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Join Conservation Montgomery for a walk through Blockhouse Point Conservation Park. This is an area rich in the natural and cultural history of the Potomac Valley. This approximately 630-acre park features mature upland forest, floodplain forest, wetlands, streams, river-rock outcrops, at least nine species of threatened, endangered, or watch-list plants, a diversity of wildlife and grand views of the Potomac River and C&O Canal.

## Update your Contact Information By Peggy Dennis, President

Many civic, homeowners and neighborhood associations have new elected officers or boards take over during the summer or autumn. Please remember to provide updated contact information to those who need to be able to reach you.

All associations should send updates to the Communications Office at Maryland National Capital/ Park & Planning Commission. Your contact is Ms. Arnita Jackson at 301-495-4600 or by email at MCP-HOA@mncppc-mc.org.

Depending on where you live, you should also update your contact information with your respective Regional Services Center:

Western County:

[kennethhartman@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:kennethhartman@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Silver Spring: [silver.spring@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:silver.spring@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Mid-County: [midcounty.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:midcounty.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Eastern County: [eastco.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:eastco.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Upcounty: [upcounty.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:upcounty.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov)

## Minutes of the September 13 Meeting By Dan Wilhelm, Acting Recording Secretary

**Call to Order:** President Peggy Dennis called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

Introductions were made all around, with new members welcomed.

**Agenda:** The agenda for the meeting was approved at the conclusion of the program

**Minutes:** The minutes of the June 14 monthly meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Bill Schrader circulated copies of the latest Treasurer's report.

### Announcements:

- Paula Bienenfeld, Education Chair, reported that the Board of Education will be meeting on September 16

about forming a search committee for the superintendent position.

- Arnie Gordon reported that the Huntington Terrance Citizens Association is waiting for a Board of Appeals decision dealing with Suburban Hospital and their plan to take 23 houses and close a public street in order to expand the hospital
- Caren Madsen, Environmental Co-Chair, informed the group that Conservation Montgomery will be holding a walk around Greenwich Village on September 25.
- Jim Humphrey, Planning, Land Use & Housing Chair, reminded the group that the Council will consider the historical designation for the three properties discussed in the newsletter on September 28 at 1:30 PM.

**Program:** Jim Humphrey introduced the program on the Zoning Ordinance rewrite with speakers: Rollin Stanley, MNCPPC Planning Director, and Pam Dunn with the Planning Staff. Mr. Stanley provided an overview of why the ordinance needs to be rewritten. At one point he indicated it is one of the worst zoning ordinances in the country, in part because of its size and complexity. In 1928 the code had 5 zones and covered 15 page. As recently as 1977, it had 41 zones and took 274 pages, but now it has 121 zones and takes 1115 pages. The purpose of the rewrite is to end up with four broad zoning categories, make the development process more predictable and streamline the process (in a related effort the staff is moving data into GIS and out of paper documents). The rewrite will not change population densities; such a change would require a master plan change. The draft language of Section 1, Agricultural and Residential Districts, is scheduled to be available in October 2010 and the other zones in December 2010. Development standards are scheduled for February 2011 and the administrative procedures in May 2011.

### Business

The following emergency resolution was made by Peggy Dennis at the request of Ginny Barns. After receiving more than the required five seconds, the resolution was unanimously approved:

“*WHEREAS*, Master Plans, particularly in the lower density residential "green wedge" zones and in the Agricultural Reserve, use the failure to grant sewer service as a tool to manage growth; and,

“*WHEREAS*, the State of Maryland, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the County Council have taken strong positions on smart growth, and are requiring that new development be concentrated around existing infrastructure; therefore,

*“BE IT RESOLVED* that the Montgomery County Civic Federation supports Master Plan restrictions on the provision of sewer service, and urges that all Sewer Category Change requests conform to area Master Plans and the Montgomery County Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan.”

### Committee Reports

**Education:** Paul Bienenfeld, chair, reported that MCPS had underestimated the number of students who enrolled in September. Concerning the MSPS recently awarded contract with Pearson, she indicated that MCPS has hired 12 people to work on the curriculum and that the management plan is behind schedule.

**Planning and Land Use:** Jim Humphrey, chair, reported that he expects the first semi-annual report from the Planning Board under Chairman Carrier to be little changed from the last one. The master plan work program is for 11 plans to go to Council in the next four years, a much faster pace than in recent years,

**Environment:** Caren Madsen chair, reported that the council expects a bill from the Executive about Forest Conservation this fall.

**Legislation:** Dan Wilhelm, chair, indicated the Committee for Montgomery had met that morning and that Nancy Kopp, Treasurer for the State of Maryland, was the featured speaker. She indicated that current revenues are below those of 2004 but they have increased slightly from the low point. Last year, revenues were \$135M higher than forecast, but FY12 is still forecast to be \$1.6B lower than those of last year. She indicated that the Governor appointed 7 people on Friday to the Public Employees' and Retirees' Benefit Sustainability Commission.

**Old and New Business and Adjournment:** There was no old or new business. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.

## Minutes of the September 22 Executive Committee Meeting by Jim Zepp, Acting Recording Secretary

**Present:** Carole Ann Barth, Paula Bienenfeld, Jim Humphrey, Bill Shrader, and Dan Wilhelm, Chuck Lapinski, Peggy Dennis

**Call to Order:** First Vice President Dan Wilhelm (President Peggy Dennis was attending the DOT meeting on Orphaned Roads) called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m. at the home of Paula Bienenfeld.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Dan called for and received unanimous approval of proposed agenda with an addition of discussion of Council Bill 44-10.

**Adoption of Minutes:** Dan offered some minor changes to 6/14 minutes and Carole had noted a few typographical corrections which were communicated to Paula.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bill reported that dues from 29 organization and 14 individual memberships have been received. The organization is well within its budget but he is expecting to receive some reimbursement requests that are not reflected in the current expenses. As of the meeting date, MCCF has received \$1,885 in income and spent \$60 in expenses.

**Announcements:** A Gubernatorial Candidates Forum is tentatively planned for Oct. 19th. If the three candidates agree to participate, the arrangements will be completed and announced at a future date by Dan. The usual format will probably be followed. Jim Zepp suggested that more time be allowed for individual candidate responses to questions to allow for more substantive comments and an opportunity to get beyond sound-bite statements.

**Future Executive Committee Meetings:** The Oct. 20th meeting will be held either at Sandy's or Dan's based on availability. The Nov. 17th meeting was tentatively scheduled for Bill's home.

**MCCF Web Site:** The MCCF WEB site has been hosted and managed by Community Web, Inc. since its inception in 2000. That organization is ending its services on Oct. 31st. Consequently, MCCF must assume active responsibility for the programming, content management, and hosting of its Web site.

Despite exploring some alternatives for this, an acceptable, low cost solution has not been found. Several Executive Committee members have made suggestions for developing and hosting the Web site that range from no cost to several thousand dollars for a complete redesign of the Web site. The choice will require an analysis of the desired functions for the Web site, ease of maintenance for updating content, and reasonable cost. Jim Humphrey volunteered to lead this effort and will begin by obtaining the current files, MCCF domain name registration, and other information from the Community Web owner.

### Meeting Programs:

October - Peggy is coordinating arrangements for a program on bicycling in Montgomery County.

November - Jim Humphrey will coordinate a presentation on the Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR). This will include a representative from the County Department of Transportation.

December – Paula will organize a program on the search process being conducted for a new MCPS superintendent.

January– Tentatively agreed to have a presentation on the new Residential and Agricultural Zoning Districts that will be coordinated by Jim Humphrey.

Possible future meeting presentations – Two topics were suggested for other meetings—the possible scope and implications of the State Constitutional Convention and the progress of the County's Organizational Reform Commission.

**Council Bill 44-10** – Since the public hearing for this proposed legislation was held on the previous day and Jim Zepp had called the Executive Committee's attention to it only the day before, there was insufficient time for the consideration of a position. However, because of its significance, the Executive Committee discussed the issue and voted to have Jim Zepp write an article about this for this MCCF newsletter.

### Committee Reports

**Education** - Paula reported that the School Board has established a schedule and process for the recruitment of a new school superintendent. She will be tracking the progress of this effort.

There was a discussion regarding the use of artificial turf on playing fields. Although the County agencies seem committed to expanding use of this material, some citizens are concerned that the health and cost issues associated with artificial turf have not been fully explored and documented. This includes the economic impact on local turf supply and maintenance companies. In addition, the reliance on one vendor as a sole source may have developed without due consideration of other possible companies. Jim Humphrey expressed the desire for an independent, credible assessment of these issues. Paula will compile information about the use of artificial turf.

**Public Safety** – Jim Humphrey reported on residents' concerns about the police response to a recent incident in the Wheaton area. This led to further discussions about available police personnel and the allocation of resources.

**Parks and Recreation** – Carole reported residents' concerns about recent activity by Parks Department vehicles observed in North Four Corners Local Park. Because this occurred shortly after a rainfall, the soft ground in the park including the ball field was compacted which will adversely affect future maintenance. If this damage is occurring in other parks, it can contribute to higher operating costs and fewer ball fields in

serviceable condition. Consequently, there is a need for a network so that residents and community organizations can report such incidents.

**Transportation** – Peggy reported on the first public meeting on the Orphaned Roads issue.

**Planning and Land Use** – Jim Humphrey reported on ZTA-10-12 which would close some loopholes involving the creation and disposal of child lots in the County's Agricultural Reserve. Currently these properties must be a minimum of 25 acres in size and child lots, which are subdivisions intended for the owners' heirs, are 5 acres. It would establish a five year occupancy minimum before a child lot may be sold to someone outside the family, create standards for forgiveness of the occupancy requirement due to extenuating circumstances, and set a limit of no more than three child lots. Jim Humphrey will draft a letter in support of this proposal.

He also noted that a public hearing will be held for the Greenwich Forest Historic District designation on Sept. 28. Jim Humphrey will testify for MCCF at this meeting.

**Public Utilities** - Chuck reported on the public hearing held by the MD Public Service Commission on PEPCO's service outages. He noted that the commissioners had indicated that they had not received enough substantive comments from the meeting and they were surprised by the citizens' negative opinion of the length of time devoted to statements by various elected officials. Jim Zepp distributed copies of the testimony delivered at this public meeting for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. That community is fortunate to have two residents, who are professional utilities consultants and one of which is the former Director, Office of Economics, DC Public Service Commission. They proposed a five point regulatory framework and three point management framework for improving PEPCO's service reliability and accountability and included examples of such from New Jersey and North Dakota.

**Committee for Montgomery** – Dan had no updates to report from that organization.

Meeting Adjourned.

# MCCF Officers & Committees

Position	Name	Home Phone	Office Phone	Email
<b>Elected</b>				
President	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738 (cell)202-744-3019		<a href="mailto:hotyakker@gmail.com">hotyakker@gmail.com</a>
1st Vice-President	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698	703-983-6847	djwilhelm@verizon.net
2nd Vice-President	Carole Ann Barth	301-593-7863		cbarth@mindspring.com
Treasurer	Bill Schrader	301-946-6545		<a href="mailto:schraderw@erols.com">schraderw@erols.com</a>
Secretary				
<b>Appointed and Past President</b>				
Member at Large	Virginia Sheard	301-949-3372	same	boots3303@aol.com
Member at Large	Jim Zepp	301-593-7863		jzepp@mindspring.com
Public Relations	Sandy Vogelgesang	301-365-2347	same	everest.associates@erols.com
Newsletter Editor	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	same	<a href="mailto:hotyakker@gmail.com">hotyakker@gmail.com</a>
Database	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698	703-983-6847	djwilhelm@verizon.net
Immed. Past Pres.	Arnold Gordon	301-570-0481	same	nmcaprexy@aol.com
<b>Standing Committees</b>				
Education	Paula Bienenfeld	301-984-2944		paula_bienenfeld@yahoo.com
Environment	Ginny Barnes	301-762-6423		ginnybarnes@juno.com
co-chairs	Caren Madsen	301-713-9042		carenmadsen@msn.com
Legislation	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698	703-983-6847	djwilhelm@verizon.net
Membership	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738		<a href="mailto:hotyakker@gmail.com">hotyakker@gmail.com</a>
Planning & Land Use	Jim Humphrey	301-652-6359		theelms518@earthlink.net
Utilities	Chuck Lapinski	301-384-0392	703-506-4600	clapinsk@mclean.mcri.com
Public Finance	Chuck Lapinski	301-384-0392	703-506-4600	clapinsk@mclean.mcri.com
Public Safety	vacant			
Transportation	vacant			
Parks and Recreation	Carole Ann Barth	301-593-7863		cbarth@mindspring.com
Nominations	to be appointed later			
Awards	to be appointed later			

Serving the County since 1925

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011

**Mail to:** William H. Schrader (Treasurer)  
12824 Middlevale Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20906  
301-946-6545; schraderw@erols.com

**Inquiries:** Dan Wilhelm (1st VP, Database)  
904 Cannon Road, Colesville, MD 20904  
301-384-2968; djwilhelm@verizon.net

Name of Organization/Individual \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Households (Approx) \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Dues (see below) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **Montgomery County Civic Federation**

Membership Type	Number of Households	PLEASE CHECK	DUES	Max Number of Delegates	Voting Privileges
<b>Local Association</b> (civic, community, homeowner or municipality. Must represent at least 10 households - not paid members. Cannot be a single local issue group.)	10 to 50		\$25*	1	Yes
	51 to 300		\$45*	2	
	301 to 600		\$65*	3	
	601+		\$85*	4	
<b>Umbrella Association</b> (Two or more local associations. Cannot be single local issue group.)	60 to 500		\$45*	2	Yes
	501 to 1000		\$65*	3	
	1001+		\$85*	4	
<b>Regional or County-Wide Organization</b> (environmental, transportation, or other advocacy organizations).	50+ memberships, not households		\$45*	2	Yes
<b>Individual Associate</b>	(not applicable)		\$20*	1	No
<b>Associate Group</b> (Gov't agency, business, or other organization)	(not applicable)		\$85*	2	No

**\*A \$5 discount may be taken for each person who elects to receive the newsletter via email – please check e-mail box below.** You can also select less than the allowed number of delegates and pay for the lesser number. Please provide all the information below regardless of newsletter delivery method. Please indicate whether you want your email address included in a membership directory.

1.	<b>Name*</b>		Phone (H/W)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H/W)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H/W)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H/W)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

\* Organization president or a permanent substitute designated by the president.

**Federation Meeting**

**Session 820**

Monday, October 11, 2010  
7:45 1st Floor Auditorium  
County Council Office Building.  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD

Agenda:

7:45 Call to Order & Introductions  
7:55 Approval of Meeting Agenda  
7:56 Approval of Minutes from September meeting  
7:57 Treasurer's Report  
7:58: Announcements  
8:00 Program : Bicycling in Montgomery County  
9:20 Committee Reports  
9:44 Old Business / New Business  
9:45 Adjournment

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation** is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization. It was founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Its monthly Federation meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Monday of each month September through June at 7:45 p.m. in the First Floor Auditorium, County Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD.

The **Civic Federation News** is published monthly. It is mailed to Delegates; associate members; news media, and local, state, and federal officials. Permission is granted to reprint any article provided proper credit is given to the "**Civic Federation News of the Montgomery County Civic Federation.**"

Submit contributions for the next issue by: **Midnight, Saturday, October 23.** Prepare submission as an MS Word, Word Perfect or text-only document, **attach** it to an e-mail, and send it to: **hotyakker@gmail.com**

Please send all **address corrections** to Dan Wilhelm, 904 Cannon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-384-2698, or [djwilhelm@verizon.net](mailto:djwilhelm@verizon.net).

**NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, October 20, 7:45 p.m.

At the home of Dan Wilhelm

904 Cannon Road, Silver Spring, 20904



**Official Publication of the  
Montgomery County Civic Federation**

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