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TO PRINT, USE **PRINT VERSION**

of note

Next MCFF Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2016, 7:45 p.m. @ the Executive Office Building in Rockville. Topic: "A Discussion on Our Roads"

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December's Community Hero

It's Bernadine 'Bernie' Karns of Calverton Citizens Association in Silver Spring.

READ PROFILE

November Minutes

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Membership Application

Join or Renew Now

SEE FORM

Federation Meeting 881

Monday, December 12, 2016

7:45 p.m.

Lobby Level Auditorium

Executive Office Building

101 Monroe Street

Rockville, Maryland

AGENDA

7:45 Call to Order/Introductions

7:50 Approval of Agenda

7:51 Announcements

7:55 Approval of Minutes,
November 14 Meeting #880

7:57 Treasurer's Report

8:00 Community Hero:

Bernadine "Bernie" Karns

8:10 Program: Roads Discussion

9:20 Committee Reports

9:45 Old and New Business

10:00 Adjournment

About MCCF Meetings

All monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public. They are held on the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 7:45 p.m.

This is the final meeting to be held in the **Lobby Level Auditorium of the Executive Office Building at 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.**

Due to construction, access to the building is difficult; walkers must come through the cafeteria. You can park (free) in the lowest level of the EOB. Drive onto the ramp in the front of the building (ignore "permit parking only" sign), turn left at the second, lower level; use the intercom at the gate to the parking garage and at the door to the elevators to inform security you're attending the MCCF Meeting. ■

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.**, is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public (agenda and details at left).

The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except July and August. It is emailed to delegates, associate members, news media, and local, state, and federal officials. **Recipients are encouraged to forward the *Civic Federation News* to all association members, friends, and neighbors.** Permission is granted to reproduce any article, provided that proper credit is given to the "*Civic Federation News* of the Montgomery County (Md.) Civic Federation."

Civic Federation News

civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, SEE **PAGE 23**

December Program: Roads? Where We're Going, We Don't Need Roads

By Jim Zepp, President

In the 1985 movie *Back to the Future*, Doc Brown ominously utters those words, then his atomic-powered DeLorean levitates and disappears with a shock wave into the unknown future of 2015! Well, 2015 has come and gone and we still need roads. Regardless of whether you believe that the next 20 years will be the same as the past, dominated by driverless vehicles, or riding mass transit or a bike, we do know that good roads will be essential for all of these alternative futures. This month's program will focus on two aspects of the County's road network—a proposal for improving traffic conditions on I-270 and maintaining the 5,200 miles of County primary, residential, and rural roads in good condition.

FIX 270 NOW

Warnings about backups and delays on Interstate 270 are almost daily features on local news traffic reports. In the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' quarterly National Capital Region Congestion Reports, segments of I-270 are regularly included among the area's **Top 10 Bottlenecks**. The 35-mile I-270 corridor carries from 79,400 vehicles a day on the north end of I-270 to 261,200 vehicles a day near the Capital Beltway.

As more commercial and residential developments are built in the **northern portions of Montgomery County** as well as **Frederick County**, these volumes are projected to increase to 107,000 to 290,000 vehicles a day by the year 2035.

The Maryland State Highway

Administration (SHA) will begin construction in summer 2017 of a new \$129.6 million interchange at I-270 and Watkins Mill Road to reduce congestion on local roads. SHA has also issued a Request for Proposals for \$100 million in state funding for the I-270 Innovative Congestion Management Project. A selection will be made in February.

Recently a new organization called **Fix 270 Now** has been created to advocate for several transportation projects related to traffic concerns along the I-270 corridor. Primarily consisting of elected officials and business organizations, it supports the following four projects:

1. New Express Toll Lanes on I-270 to relieve congestion and provide a new dedicated funding

MORE

December Program, cont.

source for road and transit improvements in the corridor. Two new Express-Toll Lanes (ETLs) in each direction, from 1-495 to Frederick (in some sections existing lanes are repurposed or reversible lanes added)

2. Regional Bus-Rapid Transit (BRT) using the New Toll Lanes: High-speed regional BRT for fast, cost-effective, transit service from Frederick to Rock Spring Park, with limited stops, Connects to CCT, Red Line, MARC, local bus routes

3. Corridor Cities Transitway. Local BRT transit service, in dedicated right-of-way, linking key centers within the corridor, from Shady Grove to Clarksburg [Note: Last October, Gov. Hogan announced that \$78 million in state funding—part of this project's estimated \$545 million cost—would

be deferred from next year to 2023 due to significant revenue shortfalls projected for the state gas tax.]

4. All other planned transit, bike, pedestrian and road improvements in the corridor, including Watkins Mill Road Interchange, short-term capacity improvements to I-270, other master-planned road, transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements

Most of the Fix270Now projects have been subjects of previous studies and plans for the area. Speaking on behalf of Fix270Now will be Rich Parsons, Vice President of the Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA). Mr. Parsons receives compensation for his role with SMTA.

COUNTY ROAD RESURFACING

On the Montgomery County Department of Transportation

(MCDOT)'s Website, it is stated that, "Road maintenance is a basic tenant of good governance." However, a growing concern for many communities is the poor condition of their neighborhood streets that have been persistent problems affecting residents for years despite complaints to the County government. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimate that bad roads cost individual motorists about \$422 annually in repairs to their vehicles. So whether through taxes or repair bills, residents are paying when their streets are riddled with potholes and failing asphalt.

MCDOT'S **Highway Maintenance FY17 Capital Improvements Program** states that \$8 million is needed annually to keep the County's approximately 957 lane miles of Primary/Arterial roads in fair or better condi-

MORE

December Program, cont.

tion and \$40 million for its 4,200 residential and rural roads resulting in a total of \$48 million required to have good roads. But substantially less is requested for this purpose by the agency and approved by the County Council.

For the current fiscal year (FY2017), \$20.5 million was requested by the County Executive and \$11.2 million was approved by the Council. Recently, the Council's Transportation and Environment (T&E) Committee approved an additional \$8 million for road resurfacing which brings the total funding for this purpose still far below the \$48 million estimated as needed for this work.

More disturbing are the **MC-DOT annual performance measures** for road resurfacing which reflect



decreasing expectations for good roads in the future: from FY2015—when 60% of primary/arterial roads and 48% of residential/rural roads were in fair or better condition—to FY2018, when only 41% of primary/arterial and 34% of residential/rural

roads are expected to be in a similar good state of repair.

A final concern is how the agency determines which neighborhoods qualify for road resurfacing and the order in which this work is done. The MCDOT website describes the **Pavement Conditions Index** that it says is used to make these determinations. The website also has more information about the **various methods of road maintenance applied by the agency and its planned projects**. The planned projects based on the \$8 million **supplemental appropriation recommended by the Council's T&E Committee** can be found in the staff packet.

Al Roshdieh, the MCDOT Director, will talk about these issues and explain why the resurfacing of the County's roads is continually underfunded and how this will be addressed in the future. ■

December's Community Hero: Bernadine 'Bernie' Karns of Calverton Civic Association

By Alan Bowser, 1st Vice President

Bernadine "Bernie" Kauffmann Karns of Silver Spring is President of the Calverton Citizens Association, Inc. (CCA). For nearly 30 years, she has been a central pillar of one of the most dynamic civic associations in Montgomery County—and Prince George's County, too—as CCA spans the boundaries of these two Maryland counties. Calverton is north of White Oak and Hillandale, and east of Fairland in the northeast corner of Montgomery County.

The "mission" of the Calverton Citizens Association is an impressive one and serves as a strong model for civic organizations and homeowner associations throughout Montgomery County and the State of Maryland. In addition to its monthly meetings where neighbors gather to



discuss important matters of community concern, CCA maintains public grounds in Calverton, promotes public safety, and advocates

on issues relating to transportation, traffic, roads, street lighting, schools, and residential and commercial development. Since Calverton is located in both Montgomery and Prince George's counties, representatives attend meetings and public hearings in both counties in order to form a strong working relationship with elected officials and have a voice in educational, traffic, zoning, recreational, and public safety matters.

Karns has encouraged meetings with Montgomery County Department of Transportation officials on speeding and pedestrian safety. She has worked with local public safety officials on gang-related issues, organized neighbors to testify on the Montgomery County Budget, and

Community Hero, cont.

has been a champion of the reopening of the Maydale Nature Center. As County officials continue their planning for East County economic development, Karns and the Calverton Citizens Association have also weighed in on a variety of transportation, environmental, and public safety concerns, including a new Bus Rapid Transit system related to the Viva White Oak development project and the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan.

Under Karns' leadership, the range of community activities that CCA undertakes is very broad. CCA holds an annual Beautification Contest, a Holiday Lights Contest, a National Night Out observance in August, the Calverton Neighborhood Walk, and a very popular and well-attended 4th of July Block Party. It's

all part of what Karns calls "celebrating Calverton Pride!"

Bernie emphasizes the importance of "neighbors helping neighbors" and the need for critical communications within the community. She recalls, when moving to Calverton in the late 1980s, the civic association was in need of new technology to publish the monthly association newsletter, which was being prepared on an old IBM Selectric typewriter. She advocated for—and persuaded the CCA Board to invest \$3,000(!) in—a computer to cut down on the time and effort of

producing the community newsletter, so that Board members could better allocate their time. She's been helping the neighborhood association of 2,600 homes to become more efficient, effective, and to expand its scope ever since.

Bernie Karns has been a guiding light for the Calverton community for decades, working hard with a dedicated group of volunteers to make their community a safe and better neighborhood. She is a "community hero." Learn more about the Calverton Citizens Association, Inc., at www.calvertoncitizens.org. ■



Are People Voting with Their Feet as Well as Their Ballots?

By Jim Zepp, President

While Ballot Question B, Term Limits for the County Executive and Council, had been widely expected to pass by many, the overwhelming support for the measure by 70% of voters was not. However, there were warning signs of widespread voter discontent among County residents for years before this last election. In 2010 and 2014, **Montgomery County had the lowest voter turnout in the state.**

Because the County's population is characterized as being well-educated, relatively high income, and liberal, the root causes were believed to be process-oriented rather than based on a general dissatisfaction with the local political leadership or the direction of County government policies and services.

However, the recent election results draw a stark contrast between the votes for national and state offices and the support for term limits on County elected officials despite the efforts of the **County Democratic Party** and the **Montgomery County Education Association**.

However, some economists also believe that migration patterns within a region can be indicative of citizens' preferences for local government services such as schools; public amenities such as parks, recreational offerings, and cultural/arts facilities; transportation access and options as well as taxes and public services fees. A major proponent of this was Charles Tiebout, University of Washington, who wrote a paper, *A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures*, in 1956 that

outlined this concept. While there can be many other factors that go into individuals' residential decisions—such as job locations, the residences of other family members, and housing prices—aggregate data on migration patterns and trends can reflect underlying public perceptions of community quality of life across local jurisdictions.

Looking at U.S. Census Bureau migration data and IRS data on changes in taxpayer residences reveal patterns affecting Montgomery County. I wrote an article that appeared in the **Dec. 2013 MCCF newsletter** (p. 8) that noted recent Census data shows that the principal source of in-migration into the County are D.C. residents. Destinations for those moving from Mont-

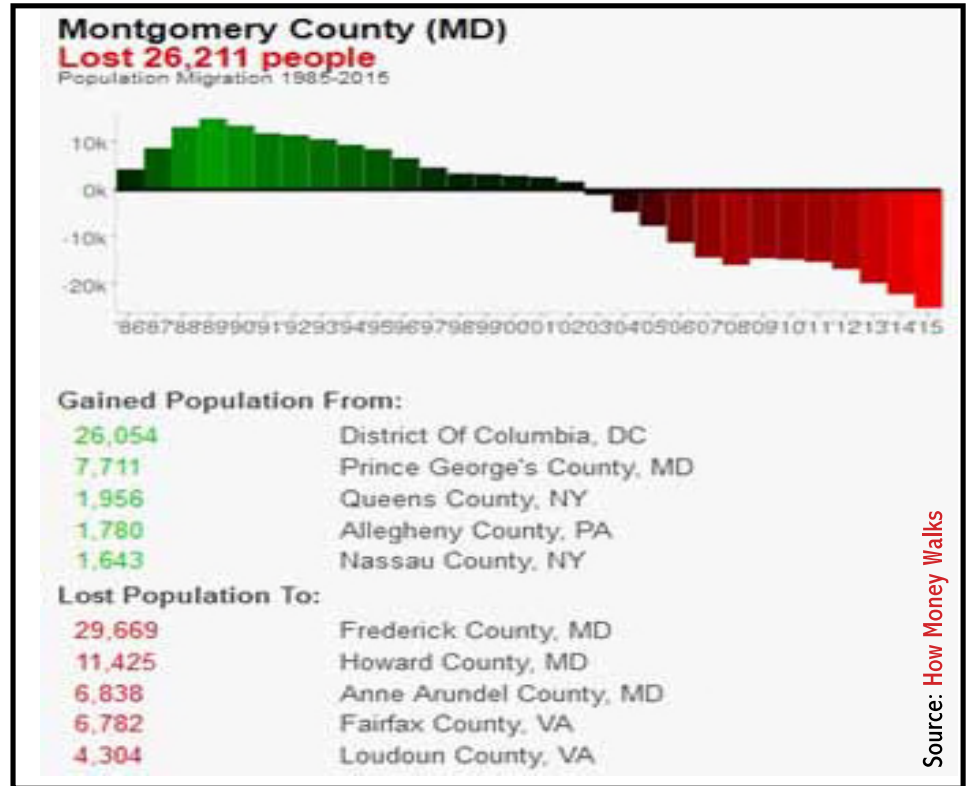
MORE

Voting with Their Feet, cont.

gomery County were even more concentrated in the local area—the top three out-migrant destination counties were Frederick County, Md.; Fairfax County, Va.; and Howard County.

These patterns are confirmed by IRS data for taxpayers' residential locations as reported on annual tax returns since 1985. The chart shows that taxpayer migration into Montgomery County peaked in 1989 and has been steadily declining since then. In 2003, taxpayer migration changed to net losses. Furthermore as with the U.S. Census data, former D.C. residents are the primary in-migrants, while neighboring jurisdictions are the primary destinations for those moving out of Montgomery County.

[MORE](#)



Are People Voting with Their Feet, cont.

Although some (including a local elected official) express the opinion when confronted with these statistics that this phenomenon must be White residents fleeing the increasing minority populations in Montgomery County, this assumption is

not supported by the U.S. Census data for migration by racial/ethnic characteristics.

The following table displays out-migration statistics as reported by the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. ■

		Percent of Total Population by Race/Ethnicity				
	Total Population	White Alone, Not Hispanic Or Latino	Black or African American Alone	Asian Alone	Other Race Alone or 2 or More Races	Hispanic Or Latino
Out-Migrants	55,052	46%	20%	11%	9%	14%
Total Residents*	947,230	51%	17%	14%	2%	16%

*Over 1 Year of Age
Data Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006–2010 Estimates](#)

CIVIC FED TONIGHT!

LOOKING FOR SPEAKERS FOR YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETINGS?

MEMBERS OF THE MCCF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAVE EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN ISSUES SUCH AS TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE AND ZONING, SCHOOLS, PARKS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, AND TAXES AND PUBLIC SPENDING. PLUS, THEY HAVE A COMMUNITY-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE ON THESE MATTERS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER TO SPEAK AT A MEETING, CONTACT SECOND VICE PRESIDENT BAILEY CONDREY AT VEEP2@MONTGOMERYCIVIC.ORG.

Council Proposal to Eliminate Public Notice, Hearings for Cell Towers in Residential Zones

By Harriet Quinn

On June 10th, the County Council introduced **Zoning Text Amendment 16-05**, which proposes to eliminate public notice and hearings for placement of “small” cell towers in residential zones. On June 16th, the MCCF Executive Committee unanimously adopted a resolution to oppose this ZTA and testified at the public hearing on July 19th. At the next MCCF general meeting on September 12, the membership voted to oppose the ZTA. The Council’s Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee discussed the ZTA on September 12. They postponed any action until they could get more information.

This ZTA proposed to eliminate public hearings for these towers in 11 residential zones and allow the

towers in six residential zones where they are not currently permitted at all. These new poles would be placed in the right-of-way in front of residences. We see no justification for eliminating public hearings for new cell tower placement, as proposed, especially when setbacks from residences are proposed to decrease from 60 to 30 feet. “Small” cell towers are not very small since they can be anywhere from 30–40 feet when including the multiple antennas.

At the insistence of residents in the Germantown and North Potomac areas, where many applications for these towers have been submitted by Verizon and Crown Castle, a public forum was held with County Staff, industry representatives, and four Councilmembers on October 26th. Several hundred residents attended.

During the meeting, County Staff said the Tower Committee had received more applications in the last four months than in the last 18 years combined.

As a result of the meeting, the Council has deferred further discussion of the proposed ZTA and the industry has put most of the previously submitted applications on hold until many of the questions and requests for information from the community have been satisfied. You may **view the recorded meeting** which is very informative about the issues involved.

The County has also established a special **web page with links to the meetings and maps where cell towers are proposed**.

In the meantime, many of the

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The Quiet Crisis Unnoticed by Most: Our Disappearing Botanical Heritage

By Carole Ann Barth

There is a quiet crisis underway, unnoticed by most people even though we see it happening all around us. One by one, we see the little remaining patches of woodland and meadow replaced by houses or apartments. We take a walk in the park, and we see trees so festooned with vines, they look like circus tents. We see deer in our yards, along the highway, and just about everywhere. We go to the home and garden center and we see Norway Maples, Bradford Pears, Burning Bush, Japanese Barberry, Periwinkle, and English Ivy available for purchase. We see all these things, but we don’t realize the cumulative impact they have on native plant populations.

Maryland has about 2,500

species of native plants, and new plant species are still being discovered. This is actually quite amazing for such a small state. It’s about as many species as Pennsylvania (2,100) which is four times bigger than Maryland. But sadly, 710 Maryland plants (roughly 28%) are rare, threatened, endangered, or extirpated. Rare plants occur in fewer than five populations. *Threatened* species are defined as those species that are likely to become endangered in the future. *Endangered* species are defined as species that are threatened with extinction. Extirpated species are locally extinct, meaning they are extinct within Maryland but survive elsewhere.

Even more disturbing, according to the Md. Botanical Heritage Work Group’s *Report for the Gov-*

ernor and the General Assembly of Md. Concerning the Preservation of Maryland’s Botanical Heritage, dated January 15, 2014: “Maryland has many areas where the majority of plant species are native, but the

MORE

Cell Towers, cont.

neighborhoods targeted to receive these towers have formed a Coalition called the Montgomery County Coalition to Control Cell Towers (MC4T). They are holding a town hall discussion on December 13th to learn more about the cell tower installations in residential neighborhoods. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the North Potomac Recreation Center, 13850 Travilah Road in Potomac. ■

Botanical Heritage, cont.

vast bulk of plant biomass is non-native and invasive.” Even wildflowers like trout lily, which was ubiquitous 10 or 20 years ago, are now becoming harder to find.

So why should we care that these plants are being lost? From a purely selfish point of view, we don't know what valuable food, fiber, chemical, or medicinal resources will be lost. For example, compounds from the wildflower Bloodroot are being tested as chemotherapy for various types of cancer cells. (Native Americans traditionally used this plant to treat cancer).

Secondly, healthy and diverse native plant communities provide a variety of ecological services, such as supporting pollinators, cleaning the air and water, and reducing flooding. Native plants are also necessary to

support healthy populations of birds and butterflies (as well as other wildlife). Research has shown that native insects (including caterpillars) cannot digest most non-native plants. No caterpillars means no butterflies and no birds.

Lastly, our native flora is a big part of the unique beauty and character of where we live. For example, the mellow gold of Hickory trees in

autumn is completely distinctive.

It's not the yellow of Aspen trees in the Rockies or the bright gold of Ginko trees in China; it's Hickory Gold. I would hate to lose that color from our world.

So what can you do to help protect our botanical heritage?

1. Do not plant invasive plants. They escape the garden and damage ecosystems as they replace native plants. You can download this [free guide to invasive plants](#) which includes suggested native alternatives.

2. Become a weed warrior, and volunteer your time to remove invasive plants from parkland.

3. Plant natives in your garden. [Go to this site to search for plants](#) that meet your garden conditions. You can also [download a booklet on plants native to the Chesapeake Bay watershed](#) (left) to take with you to

MORE

**Botanical Heritage, cont.**

the nursery when you shop.

4. Fight for the remaining green patches in our communities. Old fields, roadside verges, and remnant woods can all provide ecological services as well as providing refuges for native plants and wildlife. Instead of simply dismissing these areas because they are not pristine, they should be scientifically assessed using the Plant Stewardship Index, a standardized assessment tool that reflects the quality of native plant communities for a given area. It indicates the impacts of invasive plants and can also be used to monitor the efficacy of land management practices.

5. Support native plant conservation programs and organizations.

6. Get out and experience these plants for yourself! ■

Montgomery County Taxpayers League Meeting

www.mctaxpayersleague.org

Wednesday, December 14, 2016 ■ 6:00 – 7:30 pm

1st Floor Meeting Room, Rockville Public Library

21 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850

PLEASE NOTE NEW TIME AND VENUE

Free and open to the public

Topic: *The FY 2018 Proposed Budget for the Montgomery County Public Schools*

Speaker: *Dr. Jack Smith, Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools*

Dr. Smith will be speaking to us about his first budget as superintendent of our public schools. Please send any suggested questions on the subject by December 7th to joan_fidler@yahoo.com so they can be forwarded to Dr. Smith prior to the meeting so he is prepared to respond. This might pose a challenge as Dr. Smith will submit his budget to the Board of Education just a day before this meeting. Nonetheless, please send any questions about what you might want to see in the budget, funding of strategies, for example, or how he plans to use data to make decisions, etc.

Final Public Forum to be Held December 5th on Proposed Changes to Zoning for Commercial Short-Term Transient Lodging Facilities (B&Bs) in Residential Zones

By Harriet Quinn

At the February MCCF meeting, we discussed two Bills proposed on February 2nd by County Councilmembers Riemer and Rice that would drastically change the zoning regulations, locations, and standards for permitting commercial short term (hourly, daily, weekly) lodging rentals in residential neighborhoods. The legislative proposals are **Zoning Text Amendment 16-03—Land Use, Bed and Breakfast** and **Bill 2-16—Transient Housing Licensing and Registration**.

The bills would change zoning and regulatory standards for operating commercial short term transient lodging facilities in residential neighborhoods. We learned that the text of these bills was written with input

from industry representatives but no outreach to communities was done. A public hearing was held on March 8th and MCCF testified against the bills after approving a resolution during the February meeting.

None of the surrounding jurisdictions have such drastic provisions in their zoning ordinances with regard to commercial short-term lodging in residential neighborhoods. In fact, Montgomery County already has the most permissive standards.

Currently, short-term lodging facilities (Bed and Breakfasts) are already permitted in larger lot residential zones if the application meets health, safety, and parking standards and obtains licensing. They are also allowed in smaller lot zones (R-60/R-90) after public notice and

hearing examiner review. A Bed and Breakfast is currently defined in the code as “a detached house that is owner-occupied with no more than five guest rooms for rent and customarily serves breakfasts to guests.”

The two bills proposed would have removed the public notice and process for the R-60 and R-90 zones, but would also remove current standards for: lot size, parking, inspections, number of guests, proximity to other similar uses, requirement that the owner occupy the house, as well as other licensing standards. The bills also propose to expand the use to all residential zones including, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments.

In summary, it would be easier to obtain approval for a house to

MORE

Transient Lodging, cont.

become a commercial transient lodging hotel in a residential neighborhood than it would be to obtain approval for an accessory apartment. Accessory apartment approvals require public notice and have a hearing examiner process available, as well as standards for inspections, parking, and number of similar uses in the surrounding area. By removing current standards for commercial short-term lodging, this legislation provides more of an incentive to rent out accessory apartments on a short-term basis (less than 30 days) than to rent to tenants long-term. Replacing accessory apartments with daily rentals is contrary to the County’s affordable housing goals.

It was not long ago that the entire Montgomery County Zoning

Ordinance was completely rewritten during a four-year process that involved significant input from various communities as well as a diverse Countywide Advisory Panel that included various community representatives. The MCCF and many neighborhood associations around the County participated and provided input in that review process.

During the rewrite process, all of the “lodging” categories were reviewed, considered, and decided upon. These included hotel, motel, and bed and breakfast. The County Council adopted this new Ordinance and it became effective just two years ago.

Following the public hearing—during which most of those testifying strongly opposed provisions in the bills—the Council asked the Planning Department to hold public outreach sessions. So far, two sessions

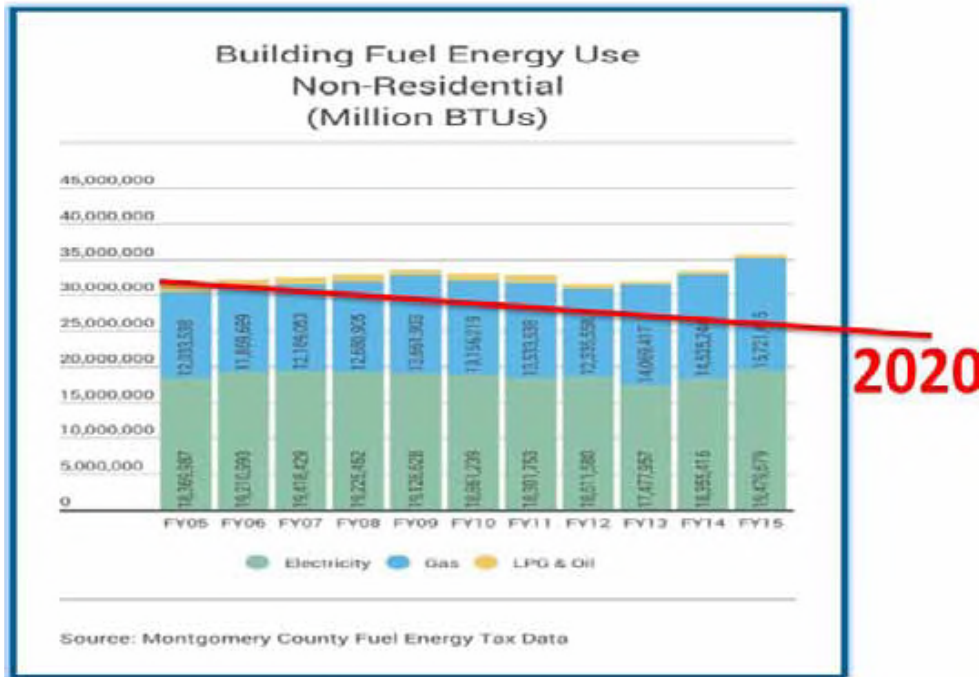
were held with planners in July and September. The final session will be on Monday, December 5th, at 7:00 p.m., when planners will announce their new recommendations. The meeting will be held in the Planning Department auditorium at 8787 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring.

Based on our preliminary review of their **Draft Recommendations**, many of the recommendations appear to be unrealistic, with an inability to be monitored given the limited resources of the housing agency, DHCA. The ability of this agency to keep up with thousands of code violations in rental properties has **recently been questioned by elected officials**.

So far, there are no details provided on how these proposed changes would be implemented by DHCA. Residents are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting on Monday. ■

WHAT'S TRENDING IN THE COUNTY

An exploration of data trends in Montgomery County. Each month statistics for a different topic will be reported.



We shared the residential building energy use two months ago. Now we're sharing the nonresidential data this time around, considering the climate change deal is looking grim.

Nonresidential energy use is up by more than 12% from the FY05 base year. Nonresidential building energy use has followed the same general trend as residential use, reaching a low point in FY12 but growing by nearly 13% in the last four years.

The red line with the 2020 is our approximation of the Climate Protection Plan goal.

Source: Montgomery County Fuel Energy Tax Data

NEXT

Minutes of the November 14, 2016, General Meeting #880

By Danila Sheveiko, Recording Secretary

Call to Order: President Jim Zepp called the 880th session to order at 7:45 p.m. Introductions followed.

Agenda: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

Minutes: It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 10th general meeting as they appeared in the newsletter. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jerry Garson's distributed report that showed a balance of \$12,737.44, with net expenditures over income for period of \$1,215.58.

COMMUNITY HEROES

Lene and Abeba Tsegaye accepted the MCCF award. The sisters are co-owners of the Kefa Cafe in Silver Spring, an important small business and community gathering place.

PROGRAM

The November program focused on the County's environment—most urgent problems and solutions.

Air Quality

Montgomery County's air quality received a grade of "D" from the American Lung Association for ground-level ozone, despite using data from official air quality monitors located in heavily wooded areas.

Even low levels of ozone may be deadly. Health effects from ozone pollution include immediate breath-



ing problems, adversely affecting about 100,000 County residents with asthma.

Water Quality

County government reports claim that water quality in our creeks and streams is improving,

MORE

November Minutes, cont.

but anecdotal evidence backed up with photos showing stream damage continuing to accelerate as continued development is creating more stormwater pollution. Rockfish in the Potomac River may or may not be safe enough to eat, with the D.C. government issuing a “Do Not Eat” warning after finding elevated levels of PCB, a potent carcinogen. Maryland reports much lower PCB levels because they only test the fillet muscles, which store less of the toxin than in the fat, the skin, and other organs.

The County’s Carbon Footprint

Montgomery County continues to increase building energy use despite a mandate to decrease greenhouse gas emissions 10% compared to 2005 levels. About a third of the

County’s carbon footprint is transportation and the other two thirds are building energy use.

Policies enacted by the Planning Board and the County Council contribute to sprawl and traffic congestion that is set to only increase in the coming years after Sector Plans with massive developments were approved in areas with no transit in sight.

Green Building Standards

Instead of reducing the carbon footprint of buildings in the County, government agencies are working to weaken our existing green building standards to the point where local building industry leaders are concerned that their competitiveness could be compromised. The award-winning PEPCO WaterShed Center house is so advanced, the County finds itself unable to issue a home

occupancy permit, so overnight stays in the fully functional house are prohibited and the building is currently permitted as a museum/exhibition space only.

RESOLUTIONS

■ Resolution to thank County Council for their continued support for archery hunting to shrink the deer herds in suburban neighborhoods and support local bill MC 10-17: Archery Hunting—Safety Zone to reduce the safety zone from 100 yards to 50 yards passed. (See text in the [November CFN, page 10.](#))

■ A second resolution was proposed by Alan Bowser:

Whereas, members of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., believe in equality, in racial, ethnic, and religious tolerance, in

MORE

November Minutes, cont.

the importance of free speech, and in the importance of civil discourse and dialogue, and

Whereas the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., has taken note of a troubling increase in politically motivated vandalism and hate speech since the November 8, 2016, General Election, and

Whereas many Montgomery County neighborhoods, churches, community leaders, and elected officials have condemned the post-Election vandalism, intimidation, hate speech, and bullying that has recently taken place in Montgomery County and across the United States,

Therefore, be it resolved that

The Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., joins with all

persons of good will in Montgomery County in speaking out against intimidation, vandalism, and hate speech in all its forms, and be it further resolved;

The Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., encourages its members to support the activities of those community-based and faith-based organizations that are working to facilitate dialogue among community members concerned about the rise of politically related vandalism and hate speech, and be it further resolved;

The Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., calls upon the Montgomery County community to remain vigilant and to promptly bring all suspicious and destructive activities to the attention of County law enforcement officials.

This resolution was approved unanimously at the Nov. meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Land Use

■ MCCF testified against [Bill 41-16](#) to eliminate the Office of People’s Counsel from County Code, which has yet to be scheduled for a committee worksession.

■ Final public meeting for the Airbnb bill is on December 5th: Zoning Text Amendment 16-03—Short-term Nightly Rentals.

■ After a big public meeting on cell towers, Zoning Text Amendment 16-05 to fast-track approval of towers in residential zones has been delayed.

■ After two PHED Committee worksessions earlier this month, the Subdivision Regulations Rewrite was fast-tracked for approval by County Council on Tuesday.

■ [ZTA 16-09](#) to permit rooftop signage on every elevation of building was passed by the full Council.

MORE

November Minutes, cont.

Environment

■ On November 15th, the County Council voted to extended deadline for consideration of **Executive Regulation 21-15** to adopt the 2012 International Green Construction Code as amended by Department of Permitting Services to the point where the bill **appears to be weakening existing green building standards.**

Transportation

■ State Highway Administration data shows that 87% of vehicle trips generated in Montgomery County are not work commute-related, pointing to a car-centric lifestyle of the populace.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m. ■

Minutes of the November 17th, 2016, ExComm Meeting

By Danila Sheveiko, Recording Secretary

The Executive Committee (ExComm) convened at the Mid-County Recreation Center [2004 Queensguard Rd, Silver Spring, Md.] at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Jim Zepp, President, called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m. Present: Carole Ann Barth, Jacquie Bokow, Alan Bowser, Jerry Garson, Harriet Quinn, and Danila Sheveiko.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda:

Jim Zepp called for and received unanimous approval of the proposed agenda as corrected and amended.

Approval of Minutes for October ExComm Meeting: Jim Zepp called for and received unanimous approval of the minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson reported a balance of \$12,737.44.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Installing Pervious Pavement workshop at Prince George's County Dept. of Environment this Saturday, Nov. 19th. A \$20 fee includes lunch. **Register online here.**

ISSUES DISCUSSED

■ **Future General Meeting Location:** Delegates reported about repeated problems gaining entry into the County Executive Office

MORE

Nov. ExComm Mtg., cont.

Building to attend the Civic Federation's general sessions. Some building security intercoms appears to be broken and/or unmanned. On repeated occasions, some Delegates had to wait up 30 minutes to gain entry, and many gave up altogether. Executive Committee is working on alternate locations.

■ **Monthly Program:** The December program will focus on transportation issues—fixing I-270 and resurfacing County roads.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education

■ The Montgomery County Public Schools Public Information Office continues to stonewall the Civic Federation's Maryland Public Information Act request from last March for documents verifying safety and

cost-effectiveness of synthetic turf fields used by County high schools. Documents uncovered by the Civic Federation so far prove that at least several synthetic fields used by MCPS are defective and dangerous. **Read more in Bethesda Magazine's "Bethesda Beat" article.**

Public Finance

■ County Council to vote on supplemental FY17 budget to include \$11 million for Marriott International headquarters to stay in Montgomery County. Public hearing is on December 6th at 1:30 p.m. **Sign up to testify here.**

Planning and Land Use

■ The new Subdivision Staging Policy and the **Subdivision Regulations Rewrite** passed the County Council.

■ Planning Department final pub-

lic forum on short-term (less than 30 days) rentals in residential zones on **December 5th**, 7:00 p.m., at 8787 Georgia Ave. in Silver Spring.

■ Councilmember Berliner's bill to abolish the Office of People's Counsel may be modified.

Transportation

■ Committee is working for State legislative priorities for the 2017 Maryland General Assembly session.

Environment

■ **Conservation Montgomery** to hold its annual meeting tomorrow, Nov. 18th, 6:00–9:00 p.m. at the Writer's Center in Bethesda.

■ The County Council voted to extend deadline for consideration of Executive Regulation 21-15 to adopt the 2012 International Green Con-

MORE

Nov. ExComm Mtg., cont.

struction Code as amended by the Department of Permitting Services.

OLD BUSINESS

Executive Committee members are still available to attend meetings of member organizations. (See further information on [page 10](#).)

NEW BUSINESS

Newsletter deadline and articles Saturday, November 26th at 6:00 p.m. to Jacquie Bokow at [civicfednews AT montgomerycivic.org](mailto:civicfednews@montgomerycivic.org).

Date and location of next ExComm meeting: December 15th, via teleconference, 7:45–9:45 p.m.

Adjournment: President Jim Zepp called for and received unanimous approval for adjournment at 9:00 p.m. ■

BUDGETPALOOZA!

MCCF's Fifth Annual MCPS Budgetpalooza in February

Join us in February for our annual “deep dive” into the \$2+ billion Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Operating Budget we call the **Budgetpalooza!** All are welcome and encouraged to “take a chapter.”

All the chapters and appendices will be posted to www.signupgenius.com and we will tweet out the link once that has been done by your Civic Federation board members. The chapter-by-chapter analysis ... that's up to you! ■

Montgomery County Civic Federation

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Submit contributions for the next issue by the 26th of the current month. Send to CFN at [civicfednews AT montgomerycivic.org](mailto:civicfednews@montgomerycivic.org).

Send all address corrections to membership AT montgomerycivic.org.

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