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of note

Next MCFF Meeting

Monday, September 11, 2017, 7:45 p.m. @ the Executive Office Building in Rockville. *Proposals by County State Delegation for Next Legislative Session*: Proposal by Charter Review Commission for Restructuring County Council At-Large Positions to District-Based Representation”

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Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the June General Meeting #886 and the Executive Committee Meeting in June will be made available at the September 11 meeting

Membership Application

Join or Renew Now **SEE FORM**

Federation Meeting #887

Monday, September 11, 2017

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
- 7:57 Approval of Minutes, June 12 meeting #886
- 7:58 Treasurer's Report
- 8:00 Program: Proposals by County State Delegation for Next Leg. Session **P. 3**
- 9:25 Committee Reports
- 9:35 Old and New Business
- 9:45 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.

The September 11, 2017, meeting will be held in the **Lobby Level Auditorium of the Executive Office Building at 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.**

Walkers can enter by buzzing security at the door. You can park for free either in the lot at East Jefferson and Monroe Streets or 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 22

At-Large or District County Council Representation, 2018 Annapolis Legislative Preview Are on Agenda for MCCF General Meeting September 11 in Rockville

Our September 11, 2017, General Meeting focuses on possible changes in the Montgomery County Charter and a preview of the 2018 Legislative Session in Annapolis. Our guests for these two important topics are **Dr. Sharon T. Freeman**, Vice Chair of the County's Charter Review Commission, Maryland State Senator **William C. Smith, Jr.** (Judicial Proceedings Committee), and Maryland State Delegate **Marc Korman** (Committee on Appropriations).

The County Charter is the constitutional framework for County Government. The County Council appoints an 11-member, bipartisan, Charter Review Commission to study the County Charter. The Commission must report to the County Council in May of every even-numbered



bered year with recommendations for possible Charter revisions. These recommendations may lead to proposed Charter amendments that are voted on by the electorate.

Charter Section 509 provides the following: "There shall be a Charter Review Commission appointed by

the County Council every four years, within six months after the Council assumes office, for the purpose of studying the Charter. The Commission shall be composed of 11 members who shall be residents of the County, five of whom shall be appointed from a list of names submitted by the County Executive. Not more than six members shall be of the same political party. The chairperson shall be designated by the Council and the vice-chairperson shall be designated by the County Executive. The Commission shall report at least once to the Council on the Commission's activities within one year after appointment of the Commission. Commission reports shall be submitted not later than

MORE

Sept. Program, cont.

May 1 of every even-numbered year. The reports shall contain recommendations concerning proposed Charter amendments, if any." (Char. Res. No. 8-935, § 1.) Please visit the [Charter Review Commission here](#).

Sharon T. Freeman, Ph.D., a resident of Rockville, is Vice Chairman of the Montgomery County Charter Review Commission. The Commission has recently discussed different models for the composition of the Montgomery County Council, including all district (no at-large) membership, fewer at-large members than currently, and all district members elected by countywide vote. The Commission is also considering proposals to modify the composition and appointment process for the panel that makes recommendations about council redistrict-

ing.

For our 2018 Annapolis Legislative Preview, we are pleased to welcome Maryland State Senator Will Smith, Jr. (D-20) of Silver Spring, and Maryland State Delegate Marc Korman (D-16) of Bethesda.

Against the backdrop of primary



elections for Governor, Congress, the General Assembly, County Executive and County Council, Maryland State representatives will consider a wide range of issues important to the State. These include education funding, health care financing, family leave, transportation funding, including a dedicated tax for Metro, public financing of State elections, criminal justice reform, the Trust Act, medical marijuana, the opioid epidemic, renewable energy issues, and others. Montgomery County's Will Smith, Jr., and Marc Korman will be leaders in the 2018 Legislative Session.

In 2014, Senator **William C. Smith, Jr.**, was elected to represent District 20 in the Maryland House of Delegates. As a member of the Judiciary Committee, Smith served on the criminal justice and family

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Sept. Program, cont.

law subcommittee. Along with these roles, Smith was a member of several key workgroups, including Justice Reinvestment, Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights, and Death with Dignity.

In 2016, Smith was appointed to represent District 20 in the Maryland State Senate, making him the first African-American Senator from Montgomery County. In the Senate, he has worked to forge relationships with his colleagues from across the state and political spectrum which has allowed him to become an effective legislator in Annapolis. As a member of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, Smith has championed robust criminal justice reform measures and has led efforts to provide economic and educational opportunities for all Marylanders.



He also serves as the Chair of the Senate Veteran's Caucus.

Marc Korman is a past chair of the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board, which advises the Montgomery County Executive and County Council on local issues including land use, transportation, education, public safety, and budgetary matters. Previously, he chaired the Citizens Advisory Board's Public Safety and Quality of Life Committee. Korman also served on the Board of Directors of

the Bethesda Urban Partnership, a nonprofit organization which markets and manages downtown Bethesda. He has also volunteered with the Action Committee for Transit to promote the Purple Line and other transit solutions to traffic, the Montgomery County Park Department to build and maintain the County's terrific network of trails, and other local organizations. Korman was in the 2013 Leadership Montgomery class.

Delegate Marc Korman was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 2014. He was born and raised in Montgomery County. Korman attended Montgomery County Public Schools and graduated from Richard Montgomery High School. In Annapolis, he sits on the Appropriations Committee as well as the Education and Economic Development Subcommittee and the Personnel Subcommittee. ■

The Bad, The Very Bad, and The Very, Very Ugly

DISSECTING THE 2017 ZTA FOR SMALLER ANTENNAS ON STREETLIGHT POLES, AT LOWER BUILDINGS

By Sue Present

Last year, Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 16-05 proposed revised standards for smaller antennas on poles in the public rights-of-way. But after strong pushback from residents, the ZTA did not move toward passage.

Then, early this year, the Department of Technology Services identified "updating County wireless siting zoning and regulations, and creation of national model 5G ordinances" as a top FY-18 priority. Staff reported that the Department of Technology Services was "working with other departments, and soliciting public input, to create a CE (County Executive) proposal to update the TFCG (Tower Committee) application process and zoning requirements to

address small cell deployment."

Initially scheduled for April, the County held its Wireless Technology Community Meeting on June 14, 2017, at which it introduced plans for a new ZTA. Shortly thereafter, the meeting's slideshow was posted and, later, a 2017 ZTA that "would amend zoning rules related to deployment of smaller antennas on streetlight poles and lower height buildings," was posted, too.

The 2017 ZTA is arguably worse, not better, than the 2016 ZTA. Problems that residents raised last year remain in the 2017 ZTA. The 2017 version is broader legislation that would eliminate or reduce more resident protections and standards. The draft that is being circulated is rough: it lacks organization

and clarity and is somewhat disconnected from the June 14 materials and presentations and the companion ZTA Summary. It is obviously a work in progress, so there may be forthcoming improvements. But there is a lot to be concerned about. Here are some key points.

■ It is sneaky! The County has continually identified this ZTA as addressing "smaller antennas on streetlight poles and at lower height buildings." But it actually **eliminates the 300-foot residential setback for both small and large cell towers in residential zones. The legislation expands the threat of large cell towers being erected in close proximity to single-family homes**

2017 ZTA, cont.

throughout the County. Additionally—and contrary to the County’s Summary—the ZTA expands the various residential zones that would be available for a large (macro) cell tower to be sited on an abutting Employment zone property, where the *required property line setback is one-half foot for every foot of height*. The proposed legislation should comport with the County’s stated intent, by establishing specific standards and opportunities that are tailored to lower height antennas and “microtowers” with smaller antennas.

It changes antenna attachments and smaller towers to Limited Uses. Last year, the 2016 ZTA proposed changing the status of poles and wireless antennas in the public rights-of-way to Limited Uses

from their current status of either Prohibited Uses or Conditional Uses. The 2017 ZTA again proposes the change to Limited Use status for the antenna attachments to poles in residential public rights-of-way and the *hardened* replacement poles with new antennas/antenna enclosures and related equipment in public rights-of-way that abut residential zones (though not for entirely new poles in the rights-of-way). But, in addition, the 2017 ZTA expands Limited Use status to antennas attached to lower-height buildings or on replacement poles that are on properties in residential zones or are in neighborhoods that abut single-family residences.

Applications with Limited Use status receive Department of Permitting Services (DPS) administrative reviews after a review and recommendation by the Tower Commit-

tee. The affected public receives no notice of the applications or of Tower Committee meeting reviews. The Tower Committee prohibits members of the public from having a voice in the review process—even to point out an applicant’s errors, even to identify potential hazards.

It expands and expedites antenna attachment opportunities on streetlight poles. For the subdivisions where the utility distribution lines are underground, the ZTA establishes an antenna on an existing streetlight pole or on a replacement to the existing pole as a Limited Use, regardless of the setback from the abutting residential property. This ZTA also increases the size standards for the antennas that may be attached to poles, and it now includes some volumetric standards for antenna enclosures

MORE

2017 ZTA, cont.

and for the related (often large) pole-attached or ground-mounted equipment.

Streetlights need to be what the industry calls *hardened* to support many of the industry’s wireless antennas and equipment. This generally involves replacing the existing pole with one that is stronger. The 2017 ZTA provides standards for these replacement poles, establishing them as a type of cell tower installation. In 2016, to avoid clutter, it was the Planning Board’s recommendation that the County establish separation distances between antennas attached to poles in the public rights-of-way. However, the 2017 ZTA provides no separation distance between antennas or antenna enclosures in the public rights-of-way, whether on the same pole or

on different poles. The replacement pole is required to be located in the approximate location as the prior pole. The new pole may be increased in height; the particular increase in height varies with venue, with wider roads having standards for taller poles. There are no size restrictions for the new pole girth/diameter.

Some single-family homes along wider roads are in close proximity to the streetlight poles. Streetlights get relocated closer to homes when the roads need to be expanded and/or pedestrian/bikeways are added. One way to mitigate the threats posed by antennas attached to poles in close proximity to dwellings could be to require a replacement pole that abuts a single-family residence to be located parallel to the prior pole but in the road median (or cul-de-sac when either of these mid-road options exist), rather than at the ap-

proximate pole location. Of course, this would entail construction costs and disruptions. But moving poles to the center of the roadway would create the greater setbacks that residents prefer, provide improved transmission to both sides of wider roadways that the industry seeks, and would arguably reduce the transmission distance and required pole height.

It expands rights to antenna attachments on low-height private structures and buildings in and abutting residential zones. With no off-site dwelling setback, cell towers can replace parking lot light poles on a private property that abuts a single-family residence. To meet Limited Use standards, the cell tower must be installed at the approximate location of the pole it replaces and be no more than 10 feet

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2017 ZTA, cont.

greater in height than the prior pole. There are no size limits to the tower's girth, and there are no limits on the number of antennas or antenna enclosure attachments.

It eliminates the setback from single-family dwellings and reduces the minimum-height standards for the antennas and antenna enclosures attached to buildings in or adjacent to residential neighborhoods as Limited Uses. Here again, antennas and enclosures are permitted in unlimited numbers. Some attachments, such as the 4-ft. by 4-ft. box antenna enclosures, could defeat the intent of the design regulations, which control bulk and scale to provide good aesthetics and community compatibility of buildings. A series of antennas, enclo-

tures, or their façades could give the appearance of an increase of a half story or more in height. The façades could also drastically change a building's form, shape, transparency, and compatibility with the neighborhood. And, in close proximity to a single-family home, the attachments could also obstruct a residential viewshed, natural light, and access to passive solar energy.

The Zoning Ordinance lacks sufficient standards to require that antennas and enclosures be unobtrusively incorporated into the buildings' architecture. Other local governments do better, and they also ensure that modifications to the façade take into consideration the scale, symmetry, and design of the structure and minimize the addition of bulk and clutter to a building.

The ZTA disregards the provisions and effects of the

federal Spectrum Act. According to an advisory paper issued by the County's outside counsel that assisted with the preparation of this ZTA, the Spectrum Act treats a complete replacement of a pole as a new (cell tower) facility. Generally, as a result, a new pole in the right-of-way may be modified or expanded by co-location. It may increase up to 10 feet in height, and antenna extensions may increase in width by six feet. On private property, height and extensions may both increase by 20 feet.

The Spectrum Act impacts both small and large cell towers. A 40-foot tower can increase to 60 feet; an 80-foot tower can increase to 100 feet. So, instead of eliminating the 300-foot off-site dwelling setback, that setback should be restored to protect residents, and it should be expanded to 320 feet to accommo-

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2017 ZTA, cont.

date the effects of the Spectrum Act.

It expands opportunities to attach antennas to utility distribution poles. Many utility distribution poles, as is the case with the aforementioned streetlights, have been located in close proximity to single-family homes. Older public rights-of-way have likely experienced more modernization activities than have the rights-of-way in areas with underground utilities. This has, no doubt, led to greater numbers of utility poles that have been relocated in close proximity to homes. The 2017 ZTA that authorizes antenna attachments to these poles as Limited Uses threatens those homes where utility poles are in close proximity.

The ZTA Summary explains that there is a preliminary agreement

with PEPCO to place limits upon the replacement of utility pole heights and to limit replacement pole height increases to one time for a change in utility pole height that would be to accommodate an antenna attachment. County materials discuss establishing new setbacks, too. And, though the ZTA requires the old pole be removed within 10 days after a replacement pole is added, this is also identified as a point of discussion and agreement. An agreement with PEPCO may prove to provide creative solutions. But in light of PEPCO's lackluster compliance with existing agreements, some skepticism is in order.

Experts disagree about whether and to what extent wireless providers have rights to attach antennas to utility poles in the utility rights-of-way or easements that are within private land, including the proper-

ties that abut single-family homes. And the ZTA, having eliminated residential setbacks and expanded opportunities for siting and attachment on properties abutting residences, arguably expands the threat for antenna attachments to utility poles that abut single-family homes.

Safety Issues. This ZTA imposes a variety of safety concerns that must be addressed.

| Antenna attachments to poles in the public rights-of-way can and have in the past caused serious and even disastrous consequences for communities.

| A small child could be unsafely obscured from vehicular traffic and/or oncoming traffic could unsafely be obscured from a small child's view if ground-mounted equipment would be placed at the bases of poles that replace streetlights in the public

MORE

2017 ZTA, cont.

rights-of-way.

| The elimination of setbacks and the reductions of standards, which allow antennas/enclosures on light poles and low buildings on private properties next to single-family homes could threaten the safety of the neighboring residential occupants.

| Whether in the Zoning Ordinance or concurrent legislation, regulations are needed to keep workers/contractors, emergency responders, and civilians safe. On-site shut-offs to power-down all antennas should be required to protect workers and contractors who maintain private buildings and grounds, and to protect emergency responders and civilians when collisions take down poles with antennas in parking lots or along the public rights-of-ways.

| Concurrent DOT legislation should require breakaway poles in public rights-of-way and all parking lots when the weights of antenna attachments and equipment would create an impact hazard. The County should include breakaway pole standards to its MOU/agreement with PEPCO, too.

| **Other Companion Measures** should be addressed concurrently with the ZTA.

| **DOT Streetlight and Roadway Standards.** The standard for a Limited Use should specify incorporating all equipment inside an appropriately configured DOT pole, unless the provider can demonstrate technological incompatibility.

DOT should also collaborate with HOAs, Community Associations, Business Districts, etc., to limit the adverse impacts of DAS and small cell antennas and equipment in pub-

lic rights-of-way, and upon abutting private properties and neighborhoods.

| **Public Information Access and Due Process.** The Tower Committee has committed to developing mapping and data tools to publicly track and report applications and existing facilities. It also plans to update application regulations so that applications will: be submitted digitally/on-line; include proof of authorization to use the proposed properties; and be required to be resubmitted with new application fees if determined to be incomplete or substantially changed after filing. However, history suggests that the Tower Committee's planned changes do not always come to timely fruition. *And much more still needs to be done so that the Tower Committee's processes become fair, trans-*

MORE

2017 ZTA, cont.

parent, and accessible to the public.

| **The ZTA undermines good planning and zoning.** This ZTA seems to have been proposed for the benefit of the industry rather than for promoting health, public safety, and general welfare and/or other stated purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.

| **The need for "most-preferred" locations and "sensitive use" designations.** This ZTA blurs the distinctions between the industrial and commercial zones where more intense uses are permitted, and the agricultural and residential zones that permit less intensive uses. It has removed some standards, reduced others, and eliminated access to the Conditional Use review process that provides residents with notice and

a voice in the process. Following what some other governments do, the ZTA should include a stated hierarchy of locations for micro cell towers and antennas, from "most preferred" to "least preferred." Only those locations that are designated "most preferred" should be Limited Uses. To qualify for a lesser preferred location, the applicant would be required to demonstrate having explored in good faith and found no "most preferred" locations to satisfy the applicant's technical requirements. A lesser preferred location review would involve public input. Some local governments also identify sensitive uses in the lesser/least preferred locations. For one local government, "sensitive uses means any residential use, public or private school, day care, playground, or retirement facility."

| **Three-year reviews.** The

County wants to review this legislation every three years for needed changes. No! Each time the County has passed a ZTA to amend antenna attachments and/or cell tower legislation, it has reduced protections to residents and property owners and provided benefits to the industry.

The rationale provided for three-year reviews is that manufacturers of antennas and components "will continue to make more compact and robust equipment." However, well-crafted legislation is flexible and anticipates change. Here again, we can borrow from other local governments' legislation, and require: (1) "the smallest, least visually intrusive antennas, components, and other necessary equipment; and (2) "all reasonable means to conceal or minimize the visual impacts of the wireless facility through integration.

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2017 ZTA, cont.

Integration with existing structures or among other existing uses shall be accomplished through the use of architecture, landscape, and siting solutions. Each application for a wireless facility is evaluated based on the proposed design, location, permits required, and other site-specific characteristics. Architecture, landscape, and siting solutions are all used in evaluating wireless facility applications. Use landscape architecture to improve views of the wireless facility as seen from the public right-of-way and neighboring properties by screening, buffering, and blending wireless facility with the surrounding environment.”

| **The ZTA fails to address the longstanding problem of getting inactive antennas removed.** Inactive antennas occupy

needed transmission space and create clutter. The ZTA can require inactive antennas to be removed. Another solution used by some local governments is to limit the lifespan of the permits issued for wireless communications facilities to 10 years. Permit expirations serve multiple purposes. Upon expiration, the facility must be removed, or, for the permit to be renewed, the provider must demonstrate the facility's compliance with regulations, including that it: (1) has active antennas, (2) has technology that meets updated standards, and (3) is not a nonconforming use (such as due to Spectrum Act expansions).

| **The Zoning Ordinance should treat wireless infrastructure developers and other developers consistently.** The ZTA grants added benefits to these developers: expedited reviews,

greater siting opportunities, and permission to use more obtrusive facilities. And it allows these developers carte blanche to place their installations *not* where the public need is great(est), but instead where the wireless infrastructure developers' investment will yield the highest return. The benefits provided to these developers diminish the safety, property values, and enjoyment of County neighborhoods. But beyond the detriments posed to the residents, property owners, and the public at large, it is reasonable to ask why nothing is expected from these wireless infrastructure developers in return.

Also, the County's June presentation materials seem to suggest that post-construction inspections have not been universally conducted. Apparently, not all wireless facilities

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2017 ZTA, cont.

have been built in accordance with the commitments to the County.

Last September, when the PHED Committee was discussing ZTA 16-05, Councilmember George Leventhal asked what other jurisdictions were doing to grapple with drastic increases in applications to deploy wireless communication facilities. As is demonstrated herein, some local governments are ahead of Montgomery County. It seems reasonable to expect our County to draw upon the good work of other local governments. But it also seems reasonable to expect legislation to be infused with our County's expertise and creativity. *We deserve better—much better—than what has been proposed as the 2017 ZTA.*

[Note: *This article with complete footnotes can be read online.*] ■

Planning and Land Use Committee Report

By Harriet Quinn, PLU Standing Committee Chair

COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING ON SHORT-TERM RENTALS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES SEPTEMBER 12 AT 7:30 P.M.

On May 11 the Planning Board made recommendations regarding the Planning Department's **Zoning Text Amendment 16-03** which modifies the ZTA that was first introduced on February 2, 2016. Their recommendations were sent to the Council, which will hold a public hearing on September 12 at 7:30 p.m. This ZTA would change the zoning in residential zones to allow, by right, short-term nightly rentals, which is any rental less than 30 days. Examples of these online services are Airbnb, Flipkey, HomeAway, and VRBO; the

operation of these essentially unlicensed hotels has grown.

Currently, residents may rent rooms in their houses or their entire dwelling for 30 days or more. Short-term rentals of less than 30 days are allowed in residential zones if the property is a licensed “Bed and Breakfast.” Planners recommended “Bed and Breakfast” remain a separate use category in the Zoning Code and a new category called “accessory residential use for short-term residential rentals” would be created. The Staff recommended that residential short-term rentals be limited to a maximum of 90 days per year for the property. The Planning Board eliminated the 90-day maximum. The proposed legislation would allow for administrative

MORE

Planning & Land Use, cont.

approval of short-term rentals if the property meets certain criteria. Since most Homeowners and Condominium Associations already have regulations restricting and prohibiting short term rentals, this legislation primarily affects neighborhoods that are not “common ownership” communities that have HOA or condominium documentation. So if your neighborhood does not have restrictions on short-term rentals, this legislation affects you.

The proposed ZTA requires notice to confronting and abutting neighbors, and allows up to six guests at a time. Although the property would be required to be licensed, there is no indication of how this would be enforced, since the companion licensing legislation is not available at this time. Civic As-

sociations are encouraged to provide testimony. You may [sign up for the hearing here](#).

UPDATE ON CELL TOWERS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

In 2016 the County Council introduced Zoning Text Amendment 16-05 that proposed revising standards and procedures for placement of small cell towers in residential zones. The proposed ZTA included eliminating notice and hearings for the towers. Following substantial pushback from communities, the County Council sent the ZTA to the Executive Branch for continued public feedback. Our June MCCF meeting presentations were on this very significant and important ZTA. All the presentations may be found [here on the MCCF website](#).

The County has now revised the ZTA and will hold two additional

public feedback meetings on Monday, September 18, at 7:00 p.m. at the Silver Spring Civic Building and Tuesday, September 19, at 7:00 p.m. at the Montgomery College Germantown Campus, 20200 Observation Drive. [Directions to the meetings and parking information may be found here](#).

All of the ZTA documents and presentations may be found on the [Planning and Land Use Committee web page](#).

Please see Sue Present’s review of the latest changes to the ZTA (see page 6) as well as her suggestions for improving the process in [her full, foot-noted article on the MCCF website](#). We strongly encourage representatives from civic associations to attend one of the two public meetings because this legislation affects every neighborhood. ■

Men’s Reproductive Health: Cell Phones, Sperm, Erectile Dysfunction, and Fertility

[Included from the *Environmental Health Trust* as a public service.]

A 2017 analysis of more than 40,000 men in 50 countries found a 52.4% sperm decline in men from North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Environmental exposures from plastics to chemicals to cell phone and Wi-Fi radiation are likely an important reason for this decline. Animal studies in female animals have found [impacts to ovaries](#) and the female reproductive system as well.

Consistent evidence from experimental research, epidemiological studies and in vitro (cells) laboratory, and in vivo (animal) studies shows that the radio frequency radiation exposure from wireless devices is associated with men’s reproductive health issues including:

- Reduced sperm count,
- Reduced sperm motility and concentration,
- Damaged sperm DNA,
- Altered sperm cell structure, and
- Increased erectile dysfunction.

“Our results indicate that exposure to RF-EMF produces increases in testicular proteins in adults that are related to carcinogenic risk

and reproductive damage,” wrote Masood Sephehrmanesh and his colleagues in the *May issue of Environmental Science and Pollution Research*. “In light of the widespread practice of men carrying phones in their pockets near their gonads, where exposures can exceed as-tested guidelines, further study of these effects should be a high priority.”

WIRELESS DEVICES AND ED

Cell phones have also been linked to erectile dysfunction (ED). In a 2013 study published in the *Central European Journal of Urology*, men with ED carried switched-on cell phones for longer periods of time (average of 4.4 hours daily) than men without ED (average 1.8 hours daily).



Phones vs. Fertility, cont.

“The epidemiological studies of men assessed for infertility were consistent in demonstrating decreased sperm motility associated with increased use of mobile phones” and “biological effects on sperm motility related to RF exposure,” stated a British Columbia Centre for Disease Control 2013 Report, *A Radiofrequency Toolkit for Environmental Health Practitioners*.

WHAT MEN CAN DO

1. Read the Fine Print

All device manufacturers advise that each device should be held at some distance away from human bodies and brains. Turn the Power OFF on phones, tablets, Mp3 players, etc., before they are placed in a pants pocket, suit jacket, or tucked into clothing.

2. Choose Non-Wireless Connections

For phone (landline), internet, printer, and entertainment gear, connect by cord or cable with all wireless features off. Turning off your Wi-Fi at night reduces your exposure significantly. However, if you have Wi-Fi on during the day (especially with the router near your body in your office) you could be getting daily significant exposure. Installing fully wired systems eliminates this source completely.

3. Increase Distance

Keep wireless devices away from your lap! Do not place your cell phone, laptop, or tablet on your lap. Decrease your exposure by increasing your distance from emitting sources. Remember that, even if a device is not in use, it will still emit regular short bursts of microwave

radiation.

4. Turn It Off When Not in Use

You can easily decrease your exposures by turning off wireless networks and devices whenever you aren't actively using them. Remember that DECT (Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications) home phones, wireless routers, and gaming consoles all emit microwave radiation *whether or not you are actively using a device*. Gaming consoles need to be completely unplugged to eliminate the radiation output.

5. Practice ‘Safe Phone’

When you must use a mobile phone, put in Airplane mode/Wi-Fi OFF when not in use and use a speaker phone, headset, or a plug-in earpiece. When you use your cell

MORE

Phones vs. Fertility, cont.

phone, do not rest it near your body. Trade in your home cordless phone for a good old fashioned landline with a wired handset and use that more often. Remember that *children should not use mobile phones except in emergency*.

6. Drive Safe

Power OFF in vehicles. Mobile devices distract us and a split second is all it takes. In terms of radiation exposure, they emit higher power radiation during travel and the metal surroundings create radiation hotspots. If your cell phone is on, *do not rest your cell phone on your lap while driving*. Place it as far away as possible.

Exposure to wireless radiation has a cumulative effect. If you make these simple changes you can reduce



your exposure significantly.

SOME OF THE RESEARCH

■ **“Proteomic Impacts of Electromagnetic Fields on the Male Reproductive System,”** *Comparative Clinical Pathology*, March 2017. The study reviewed structural and functional proteomic [protein] changes related to EMF exposure, categorized based on main affected tissue and most important adverse

effects. The results “demonstrated significant effects of radio-frequency-modulated EMF exposure on the proteome.”

■ **View an interview with Dr. Hagai Levine on a study showing declines in sperm count** on “The Rundown,” i24 News. [4:06]

■ **“Environmental Impact on Semen Quality: What is the Role of Non-ionizing Radiation?”** Lecture by Hagai Levine, M.D. [21:27]

■ **“Scientific Imaging of Cell Phone Radiation,”** Lecture Clip by Dr. Devra Davis [0.44]

NEWS ARTICLES

■ **“Sperm Count in Western Men Has Dropped Over 50 Percent Since 1973, Paper Finds,”** *New York Times*

■ **“Cellphone Radiation May Cause Male Infertility,”** *Vanguard*

■ **“Let’s Talk About Male Infertility,”** *Toronto Star* ■

Scenes from the 2017 Awards Celebration



MCCF's annual Awards Celebration was held this year at McGinty's Public House (above) in downtown Silver Spring on Thursday, June 8th.

The Wayne Goldstein Award for outstanding service to the people of Montgomery County (right) went



to Jamison Adcock (holding plaque) and the Coalition Against Avery Road Depot (CAARD), a grassroots coalition formed to address the County's efforts to relocate the Shady Grove school bus depot into various neighborhoods. Former MCCF President Cary Lamari (second from left) presented the award to the group. [MORE](#)

Scenes from the 2017 MCCF Awards Celebration, cont.



The Sentinel Award, sponsored by the *Montgomery Sentinel* newspaper, was awarded to the Coalition of Bethesda Area Residents (CBAR) for their successful efforts to collaborate with the various neighborhoods in and around Bethesda to form a common vision for a vibrant downtown Bethesda surrounded by livable communities. CBAR was founded by Mary Flynn (holding plaque). Marc Elrich, at-large member of the County Council (center), presented the award.

State Rep. Ben Kramer (below) reads the citation for The Star Cup, which was awarded to Jim Zepp (right, with wife Carole



Barth), our current President and Public Safety Committee Chair. Jim is also a member of the MCCF Transportation Cmte. and previously served as MCCF First and Second Vice President. ■

CIVIC FED TONIGHT!

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR POSSIBLE TOPICS OR 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, taxes and public spending, and setting up websites and newsletters. Plus, they have a community-oriented perspective on these matters. If you would like an executive committee member to speak at a meeting, contact President Jim Zepp at president@montgomerycivic.org.

Please let him know what topics and possible dates that you are interested in and where and when the meetings are held.

New MCCF Membership Year Began July 1

Our new membership year began on July 1. Delegates are asked to verify that their treasurers have sent in the Membership Form with a check for the association's dues. The Membership Form can be found [here on the MCCF website](#).

Many civic, neighborhood, and homeowners associations elect new officers or boards during the summer or autumn. Please remember to provide updated contact information to those who need to be able to reach you. Check to be sure that the Montgomery County Planning Department has your updated data for their mailing list; use their [HOA/CA Updater Tool online here](#) to check and correct your group's contact information.

If you have changes during the year after sending in your [MCCF renewal form](#), email your changes and corrections at any time to [mccivicfed AT gmail DOT com](mailto:mccivicfed@gmail.com).

If you'd like to get more involved with the MCCF, we're looking for a Recording Secretary and chairs for our Education and Legislation standing committees. ([See our current officers list](#).)

Thank you for your continued support and participation. We look forward to working with you this year. ■

\$5,000 Tax Credit for Student Debt (Apply by 9/15/17!)

Have you (or do you know someone who has) incurred at least \$20,000 in undergraduate student loan debt and have at least \$5,000 in outstanding undergraduate student loan debt remaining? If so you are eligible for a tax credit of up to \$5,000 on your 2017 personal income tax!

As a result of legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly, there is a new tax credit available for Maryland residents.

The only requirements are:

- Incurred at least \$20,000 in total undergraduate student loan debt;
- Have at least \$5,000 in outstanding student loan debt during the tax year for which you are applying.

The deadline is September 15 to be eligible to receive a credit on this

year's taxes. The tax credit is also available in future years.

There are \$5 million of tax credits available. Priority will be given to those with the highest ratio of student debt to gross income and then to those who graduated from Maryland institutions.

You can find out more about the tax credit and get an application form by going to mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/Pages/Student-LoanDebtReliefTaxCredit.aspx.

If you do not yourself have student debt, pass the word to your friends and relatives. ■

Montgomery County Civic Federation

www.montgomerycivic.org

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The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except July and August by the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. 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."

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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