

**March Program: Montgomery County Budget** | Rich Madaleno, Montgomery County's Chief Administrative Officer, will be our guest speaker | **P. 3**

**The FY2024 Approved Operating Budget** | What the County Council approved | **P. 4**

**MCCF's FY2025 Budget Priorities** | Here are our recommendations regarding the FY2025 MoCo operating budget | **P. 12**

**Planning Board to Hold Public Listening Sessions on Attainable Housing Strategies** | Two sessions will be held on March 21 | **P. 15**

**MCCF Testimony on Synthetic Turf Chain of Custody Bill** | Jerry Garson testified on Bill HB 457 | **P. 17**

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## of note

### **Next MCCF Meeting #951**

March 11, 2024, 7:30 p.m. *online via Zoom*. Topic: "The Montgomery County Budget."

! **Join the Zoom Meeting Here**

[See further instructions on page 2. No password is required.]

**AGENDA, P. 2 • PROGRAM, P. 3**

### **Meeting Minutes**

February Meeting #950 **P. 18**

Executive Committee Meeting

**FEBRUARY P. 20**

### **Membership Application**

**JOIN ONLINE | MAIL-IN FORM**

## Federation Meeting #951

Monday, March 11, 2024

7:30 p.m.

Online Zoom Meeting

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: February General Meeting **P.18**
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Announcements
6. March Program: Montgomery County Budget **P.3**
7. Committee Reports
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. 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.

**The March meeting will be held online via Zoom** (see page 3 for program) at 7:30 p.m.:

■ To be part of the video conference, first **visit the Zoom website** to download the program for your phone or computer.

■ **Date and Time:** Monday, March 11, 2023, 7:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

■ **To join the Zoom meeting from your browser, use this link.**

■ **To participate by phone (audio only), call 301.715.8592.** The meeting ID is **841 9233 7395**. No password is required.

We hope you will join us! ■



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 20**

## Montgomery County CAO Rich Madaleno is March's Guest Speaker

Rich Madaleno was appointed as Montgomery County's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in 2020. The Montgomery County CAO is the second highest ranking executive branch position after the County Executive. Mr. Madaleno is responsible for overseeing operations and services of over 30 executive branch departments with a \$5.5 billion operating budget, \$5.1 billion six-year Capital Improvement Program, and 10,000-person workforce supporting a jurisdiction that is over 500 square miles with 1.06 million residents.

As CAO, Mr. Madaleno also serves as advisor to the County Executive on all administrative, legislative, financial, and operational matters; a lead liaison between the County Executive and County Council; a liaison to organized labor rep-



representatives of the County government workforce; and the head of the County's \$6 billion employee investment board and retirement system.

Since taking over as Chief Administrative Officer in August of 2020, Mr. Madaleno has led the

County government's response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as recovery efforts from its impacts. Montgomery County has been recognized nationally and internationally for its success in mitigating case rates and surges, achieving among the highest vaccination rates throughout the nation, and providing quick and equitable economic relief and resources to its residents and businesses.

Concurrent to managing the impacts of the pandemic, Mr. Madaleno is also in charge of implementing County Executive Elrich's efforts combating climate change, expanding affordable housing opportunities, implementing all budget and policy decisions through an equity lens, reimagining public safety, and creating

## March Program, cont.

economic opportunity and jobs.

Under his leadership, Montgomery County has passed one of the most aggressive climate action plans in the country, established the first Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, recorded levels of private investment in the County's economy, and made historic investments in education and housing. Furthermore, under Mr. Madaleno, Montgomery County has maintained a AAA bond rating from all three rating agencies; out of the approximately 3,100 counties in the United States, only 50 have accomplished this rare achievement.

Working with County Executive Elrich, Madaleno helped lead the effort to repeal the County's outdated Charter revenue cap. This measure was adopted by the voters in 2020 by

a margin of nearly two to one.

Prior to serving as CAO, Mr. Madaleno was the Director of the County's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), carrying out the department's mission of providing budget information that is transparent,

comprehensible, and easily accessible for all. As the Director of OMB, Madaleno had to guide the County Executive to overcome an inherited \$90 million deficit in his first budget cycle and the onset of the pandemic the following year. ■

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## The FY24 Council Approved Operating Budget

On March 25, 2023, the Montgomery County Council voted to approve the County's \$6.7 billion Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Operating Budget and the \$5.7 billion amended FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The FY25 Recommended Operating Budget will be released by County Executive Marc Elrich on March 15, 2024. We're including information about the FY24 budget to provide context for the County's upcoming recommended operating

budget.

Last year, the Council voted 7-4 to reduce the proposed property tax rate to a 4.7-cent increase per \$100 of assessed value, which reduces the tax burden on property owners by approximately \$118 million, while also funding MCPS at the largest year-to-year increase since the Great Recession. The Council also took action to use County resources efficiently by reducing the recom-

## Operating Budget, cont.

mended budget by more than \$49 million and identifying an additional \$7.7 million in resources. The Council funded a reconciliation list of high-priority items to fund essential services for residents totaling \$215.4 million. These combined actions reduced the tax-supported Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget by \$110.7 million compared to the Executive's recommended budget.

With a total budget of \$3.165 billion allocated for MCPS, which is approximately half of the County's tax-supported budget, Montgomery County continues its strong and steadfast commitment to education. The County ranks near the top of all Maryland jurisdictions for total per pupil funding for MCPS. The budget also fully funds Montgomery College at \$345 million. Key features of the

FY24 Operating Budget follow.

### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Almost half of the County's total budget funds MCPS with a budget of more than \$3 billion, which is an increase of 8.4 percent from the FY23 Operating Budget. This funds 97.5 percent of the Board of Education's request in tax support funding and 68 percent of the requested increase in County funding; 63 percent of the total FY24 MCPS budget is funded by County funds. Bolstered by the 4.7-cent property tax increase dedicated to the schools, an additional \$156.4 million in County revenue and \$215.7 million in total tax-supported revenue was added for MCPS in FY24. This funding is more than enough to fully fund the negotiated agreements for teachers, support staff, and administrators, as well as

other key priorities.

The 8.5 percent increase in County funding for MCPS in FY24 brings the increased investment in MCPS to a nearly 14 percent increase in County funding alone over the last two budget years.

In addition, the updated recordation tax rates recently approved by the Council largely benefit the MCPS capital budget and allow much needed facility renovations, HVAC replacements, and other school infrastructure and capacity projects to move forward, even under historic inflationary and supply chain cost challenges.

The County also provides significant amounts of funding for critical MCPS support services, including school health nurses, technology modernization, Linkages to Learning programs, and school-based health

## Operating Budget, cont.

and wellness centers.

### MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

The Council fully funded Montgomery College's operating budget at \$345.2 million. The College requested the Maintenance of Effort level of \$148.4 million—which is the minimum level required by the County—and requested to supplement these funds with \$20 million in fund balance for its FY24 operating budget. The College's budget assumed the first tuition increase since FY20, at a rate per semester hour increase of \$2 for County residents, \$4 for State residents, and \$6 for nonresidents.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

The Council funded a budget of more than \$313 million for the Montgomery County Police Depart-

ment. This is a 5.3 percent increase compared to last year's budget. The approved budget includes funding for four crossing guard positions, three firearm instructors, and a wellness officer, plus several technology initiatives to facilitate improved public safety response.

In the Sheriff's Office, the total budget is \$29 million, which is an increase of more than \$2 million or eight percent from last year's budget.

The budget for the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation is nearly \$77 million. This is an increase of more than \$3.5 million, or five percent, over the approved FY23 budget.

The Fire and Rescue Services operating budget is \$266 million. This is a \$14 million increase from last year. The approved budget includes 11 new positions that will enhance emergency medical services delivery.

The Council included more than \$4 million in the budget for the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, including an additional \$100,000 for nonprofit security grants for organizations and facilities at high-risk of hate crimes.

### NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS

The Council funded salary and benefit increases for employees represented by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), the Municipal and County Government Employees' Organization (MCGEO), and nonrepresented County government employees. In FY24, these increases total more than \$61 million.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Council approved \$3.2 million for the County's incuba-

## Operating Budget, cont.

tors and economic partnerships. A new nondepartmental account was created this year to support small businesses. The funding includes more than \$1.2 million to support Black- and Latino-owned businesses in Montgomery County.

It also approved \$3.5 million for the County's Economic Development Fund, which is used to assist private employers who are located, plan to locate, or substantially expand operations in the County.

It approved nearly \$11.1 million in the budget for the Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Wheaton Urban Districts. This year, the Council also approved an amendment to the FY24 budget to appropriate funds collected by the newly formed Friendship Heights Urban District.

The Council approved a nearly

\$1.9 million appropriation for the KID Museum to fund organizational development and growth, expand new initiatives, and deepen community outreach and engagement. The KID Museum provides hands-on learning that develops STEM education for program participants through creativity and critical thinking skills. It expects to serve more than 40,000 residents in FY24, with approximately half of yearly program participants being from under-resourced communities.

The Council continued its support of the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) with an almost \$6 million appropriation in FY24. MCEDC advances the County's economic development goals by connecting businesses located in, locating to, or expanding in the County with critical resources, such as local real

estate intelligence, funding, business incentives, and talent.

The Council supported Work-Source Montgomery, which is the County's lead workforce development organization, with a more than \$2 million appropriation. This is an increase of almost three percent compared to the previous year.

It also approved more than \$6 million to the Arts and Humanities Council, which provides the infrastructure to maintain and support 500 cultural organizations and 2,000 artists and scholars in the County.

The Council approved a \$71 million operating budget for Alcohol Beverage Services, which provides licensing, wholesale and retail sales of beverage alcohol products, enforcement, and education and training programs.

## Operating Budget, cont.

### TRANSPORTATION

The Council funded the Department of Transportation's (DOT) General, Mass Transit, and Parking Lot District Fund budgets at more than \$270 million in total. Nearly \$300,000 in funding is included to support the Transportation Service Improvement Fund; funds were also added for bridge inspections and the maintenance of new subdivision roads.

### OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Council funded the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) at nearly \$1.4 million, which is an increase of \$122,000 or almost 10 percent from the FY23 approved budget. Personnel costs comprise over three quarters of

the budget and fund 8.5 full-time equivalent positions for the ORESJ in FY23.

### OFFICE OF FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE

The Council provided \$1.1 million in funds to the Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR), which develops strategies for improving and maintaining the efficiency, equity, sustainability, and resilience of the countywide food systems. FY24 OFSR operating funds will support food security priorities, including the Market Money Grants program, gardening grants, Farm to Food Bank program, and the Strategic Plan to End Childhood Hunger.

### HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Council funded more than \$480 million for the Department of Health and Human Services

(DHHS), which is an increase of almost 11 percent compared to last year's budget. In addition, it included \$120 million for Children, Youth, and Family Services; \$53 million in Behavioral and Health Crisis Services; \$98 million for Public Health Services; \$59 million for Services to End and Prevent Homelessness; and more than \$66 million for Aging and Disability Services.

The approved budget includes the following items: \$595,069 to operate a new school-based health center at South Lake Elementary School; \$110,549 to restore funding to substance abuse rehabilitation providers; \$300,000 to restore funding for educational support services through the George B. Thomas Sr. Learning Academy; and \$673,699 to continue Youth Harm Reduction Initiative services.



## Operating Budget, cont.

Food insecurity continues to be a significant need in the County; therefore, the budget includes \$6.4 million in one-time funding to continue the County's response to this need.

The Council recognized the extraordinary work of the County's nonprofit organizations and approved additional funding so that eligible contracts can be increased by three percent. The Council added more than \$850,000 to the budget to provide supplemental funding to organizations that serve and care for residents with developmental disabilities and increased funding for the supplement to adult medical day care providers.

The Council also supported funding the County's Minority Health Initiatives and programs and ap-

proved more than \$2.5 million in funds to continue their essential and culturally competent work in communities across the County by providing guidance, resources, and health care to some of the County's most vulnerable residents.

It also funded the Guaranteed Income Pilot NDA by more than \$3 million, which is a 24 percent increase from the FY23 Approved Budget.

## WORKING FAMILIES INCOME SUPPLEMENT

The Working Families Income Supplement program was funded at \$27.5 million, which provides funds to supplement Maryland's refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and is intended to benefit working families with low incomes in the County. This is a decrease of \$25 million due to the end of Federal

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The Council approved a supplemental appropriation of more than \$4 million due to the higher than anticipated number of recipients in the prior year.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Council continued its ongoing commitment to generating and preserving affordable housing. The Council allocated more than \$77 million in funds for the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, which aims to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing, maintain existing housing in a safe and sanitary condition, preserve the safety and quality of residential and commercial areas, ensure fair and equitable relations between landlords and tenants, and support the success of common ownership com-

## **Operating Budget, cont.**

munities.

In addition, the Council supported the production and preservation of affordable housing by allocating \$57 million to the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF). The Council also provided \$8 million to the Housing Opportunities Commission.

### **RECREATION**

The Council funded total expenditures of more than \$60 million for the Department of Recreation. This is a nine percent increase compared to last year's budget. It includes more than \$3 million for senior adult programs and more than \$14 million for youth development programming. The budget includes the expansion of two youth development programs: TeenWorks, which provides job readiness training and

skill building workshops; and Excel Beyond the Bell (EBB) Elementary out-of-school-time programming at two new sites in Harriet R. Tubman and Watkins Mill Elementary Schools.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

The Council approved a \$9 million operating budget for the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) General Fund, which is a 20 percent increase from last year's approved budget to expand the County's Tree Montgomery program and climate-change related efforts.

In addition, the Council approved \$18.6 million to fund the Montgomery County Green Bank, which leverages public and private investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the County. The Council approved \$33.9 million for the Water Quality Protection Fund,

which is an increase of 9.4 percent, while lowering the Executive's proposed increase in the Water Quality Protection Charge by \$2. The Council also approved more than \$142 million for DEP's Recycling and Resource Management Division.

### **LIBRARIES**

The Council funded the total recommended FY24 Operating Budget for the Department of Public Libraries at nearly \$50 million, which is an increase of nearly \$4 million or eight percent from the FY23 Approved Budget of \$45 million. The Council included funding to recruit and hire frontline library positions to provide increased customer service and presence to residents.

Additionally, the Council fully funded refurbishment costs for Damascus Library and Senior Center

## Operating Budget, cont.

and approved \$1 million in state aid for both Damascus and Long Branch library branches for building and site improvements.

### PARK AND PLANNING

The Council provided \$171 million in tax-supported funding for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), which is a nearly six percent increase from last year's approved budget. An additional \$300,000 was provided for park activation, natural resources management and internships. Funding was also included for the Germantown Employment Corridor Check-In and the Randolph Road Corridor Study.

### WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

The Montgomery and Prince George's County Councils held their bi-county meeting and reached a budget agreement for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). The Councils fully funded WSSC's Operating Budget and CIP, and approved a FY24 Operating Budget of \$931 million, which is a \$66 million or seven percent increase from the FY23 Approved Operating Budget.

### AMENDED FY23–28 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The County's FY2023–2028 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) as amended is \$5.7 billion (without WSSC Water Projects).

In April, the Council received a status update on the Amended FY23–28 CIP affordability. The update

identified a total six-year gap of \$207.5 million because of the Council's goals of funding the requests of the Board of Education, Montgomery College, and M-NCPPC; not delaying essential capital projects; and staying within the Spending Affordability Guidelines, instead of increasing the guidelines by \$40 million as proposed by the Executive.

On May 9, the Council enacted Bill 17-23, Taxation—Recordation Tax Rates—Amendments, which progressively increased the rates for the recordation tax. This increase is estimated to generate \$187.3 million in revenue during fiscal years 2024–2028. This action significantly decreased the affordability gap in the CIP expenditures relative to resources.

The CIP approved by the Council maintains the approved Spending Affordability Guidelines for General

## Operating Budget, cont.

Obligation Bonds of \$1.68 billion across the six-year period. Expenditures are reduced and adjusted each year through a combination of production delays and technical adjustments, as well as a limited number of cuts and deferrals in Montgomery County government and agency projects.

The approved CIP includes the necessary funding to keep all individual MCPS projects on the approved schedules and within the scope requested by the Board of Education. Some of the projects include: maintaining the \$48 million Board of Education request to fund the Burtonsville Elementary School replacement project; the \$47 million addition to the JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres; the nearly \$195 million in funding

for a new high school in the Gaithersburg area to be named Crown High School, which will reduce overcrowding at surrounding high schools; more than \$200 million to expand Northwood High School in Silver Spring; and more than \$195 million for the Charles W. Woodward High School reopening project.

The Council also took action to address school-based health programs by adding funding to plan and construct additional High School Wellness Centers, after a comprehensive analysis of need has been completed for candidate high schools and shifts \$1 million in general obligation bond funding to State aid programs. The CIP budget also adds \$850,000 in general obligation bonds to fund the planning, design, supervision, and construction of a Linkages to Learning Center at Greencastle Elementary School. ■

## MoCo Civic Federation's FY25 Budget Priorities

The Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc., recently stated its recommendations regarding the FY25 Montgomery County Operating Budget.

**Office of the People's Counsel.** The Civic Federation has given highest priority to re-funding and re-establishing the Office of the People's Counsel, as described in the County Code. It is our view that, in light of the adoption of a new General Plan and the likely consideration of new land use planning proposals by the County Council, the OPC can provide immense benefit to low income and underserved communities as they address planning and land use issues affecting their neighborhoods. We note that the County Council's Office

## Our Budget Priorities, cont.

of Legislative Oversight has recently stated that the OPC would greatly assist these neighborhoods and support social equity and racial justice concerns throughout Montgomery County.

**I Job Creation and Economic Development.** The Civic Federation has expressed the view that job creation and economic development are essential prerequisites for a thriving community. We urge the County Government to increase its efforts to support economic development and job creation in all parts of the county, by supporting small businesses, especially women-, minority-, LGBTQ- and veteran-owned businesses; creating new business incubators; and giving special attention to new investments in Silver Spring, Wheaton, and the Route 29

corridor.

**I Environment and Climate Change.** The Civic Federation has strongly advocated for effective and innovative approaches to dealing with issues of climate change and environmental sustainability. To this end, we urge Montgomery County to increase tree planting throughout the County, but especially in the areas of low tree canopy. We also express support for an enhanced effort to remove stumps and to remove invasive plants along the public rights of way. We also support increased emphasis on stormwater management programs that focus on green infrastructure.

**I Fiscal Policy.** The Civic Federation has expressed concern about the recent series of tax increases and fees that are affecting Montgomery County residents, including increases in property and recordation

taxes and fees. We are concerned about the increasing size of government and, notably, the significant increase in compensation for government employees, in excess of the rate of inflation. It is our view that revenue-increasing measures should be postponed or—to the extent that they are needed to fund essential programs—minimized to the greatest extent possible. All spending must be evaluated through a lens of racial equity and social justice.

**I Affordable Housing.** The Civic Federation believes that there is a housing crisis in Montgomery County that needs to be quickly and effectively addressed. We understand that this is a complex issue and that it will take time to address the supply and demand issues related to housing. We support efforts to increase the percentage of MPDUs

## **Our Budget Priorities, cont.**

in new development, the preservation of existing affordable housing to the extent possible, the co-location of affordable housing on public properties, and more support for the Montgomery Housing Partnership. We strongly support resident input, consultations, and participation in land-use decisions affecting neighborhoods.

**I Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety.** The Civic Federation continues to strongly emphasize and support efforts to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety in our neighborhoods. We are and have been long-term supporters of Vision Zero programs and policies. We advocate for enforcement of red light and speed camera violations and special attention to pedestrian safety and traffic enforcement around elemen-

tary, middle, and high schools.

**I Public Safety.** The Civic Federation recognizes public safety as one of the primary responsibilities of government. We are concerned about staffing shortages in the Montgomery County Police Department and the shortage of 911 operators. We support the increased use of technology to assist law enforcement to do their jobs to keep our communities safe. We support the hiring and deployment of more mental health specialists to assist law enforcement professionals in their contact with residents. We call on the County Government to consider and implement measures, including subsidies, to support housing for law enforcement personnel in our communities.

**I Transportation and Roads.** The Civic Federation commends the Montgomery County Department

of Transportation for its work. We support accelerated maintenance of County roads and accelerated sidewalk construction in areas where residents support it. We support the timely replacement of the American Legion Bridge and continue to support Free RideOn for County residents. ■

## Planning Board to Hold Public Listening Sessions on Attainable Housing Strategies

*[The following news release, dated February 23, 2024, invited community members to give feedback to Planning Board at two listening sessions March 21 on proposed strategies to expand housing options in Montgomery County.]*

The **Montgomery County Planning Board**, part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (**M-NCPPC**), invites community members to give their feedback to Planning Board members during two listening sessions—one in the afternoon and one in the evening—on Thursday, March 21, on the Montgomery County Planning Department's **Attainable Housing Strategies initiative**, which identifies ways to grow housing supply and expand housing choices throughout the County, meet projected household

growth, and expand homeownership opportunities for all.

The Planning Board has also scheduled a series of public work sessions this spring to consider community feedback and add its comments to the project's recommendations. This is part of a continuation of an initiative started in 2021 when the Montgomery County Council directed Montgomery Planning staff to comprehensively review options for spurring more diverse types of housing in Montgomery County.

Community members **may sign up to comment** live at the Planning Board's March 21 listening sessions either in-person or online via Microsoft Teams. Individuals may also provide written comments to the Planning Board ahead of the listening session **via email**.

### **THE ATTAINABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES INITIATIVE**

The Attainable Housing Strategies initiative launched at the direction of the Montgomery County Council on March 4, 2021, to “consider zoning reforms that would allow greater opportunities for **Missing Middle housing** in Montgomery County.”

In 2021, Montgomery Planning staff reviewed zoning and planning policies and conducted community outreach to prepare a comprehensive strategy on how the county can enable and encourage the construction or renovation of more diverse housing types beyond the typical detached single-family home. Montgomery Planning staff presented their **draft Attainable Housing**

## Listening Sessions, cont.

**Strategies recommendations** to the Planning Board during a series of work sessions in 2021. However, the initiative and the completion of the draft recommendations were put on hiatus in 2022 to focus on the completion of **Thrive Montgomery 2050**, the County's newly adopted General Plan.

Reenergizing the initiative is part of an ongoing, multiyear effort by Montgomery Planning, the Planning Board, and the County to develop long-term strategies to address the housing shortage. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments estimates the County needs to add an estimated 31,000 housing units countywide by 2030 to meet expected housing demand and job growth.

The upcoming series of additional livestreamed work sessions

this spring (see full schedule below) will give the Planning Board an opportunity to review and refine the project's recommendations that were developed in 2021. After the work sessions are completed, the Planning Board will send a detailed report with its official recommendations on the initiative to the Montgomery County Council for its consideration.

Learn more about the initiative on **Montgomery Planning's Attainable Housing Strategies website**.

### PLANNING BOARD SCHEDULE FOR 2024\* (subject to change)

#### ! February 22

Montgomery Planning staff briefed Planning Board members on the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative and next steps. **Watch the presentation.**

#### ! March 21

Attainable Housing Strategies public listening sessions:

*[Sign up to provide comments to the Planning Board at the afternoon listening session, the evening listening session, or select the option for either session and you will be assigned to speak at one of the sessions.]*

#### ! April 11

Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board work session.

#### ! April 25

Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board work session.

#### ! May 9

Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board work session.



## Listening Sessions, cont.

### ■ May 23

Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board work session (if needed).

### ■ June 6

Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board work session (if needed).

*\*All Planning Board meetings, listening sessions, and work sessions are **livestreamed** and archived on its **website**, where agendas are generally posted two weeks ahead of time.*

*Community members interested in staying updated on Montgomery Planning's housing work are encouraged to sign up for **our housing e-letter**. ■*

## MCCF Testimony on Synthetic Turf Chain of Custody Bill

Dear Delegate Marc Korman and Other Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am Jerry Garson, writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. (MCCF), which represents about 150,000 Montgomery County residents. The MCCF considered **Bill HB457, Environment - Synthetic Turf - Chain of Custody**. The Civic Federation unanimously voted in favor the legislation for the following reasons:

■ This legislation would require the Maryland Department of Environment to establish a system to track the chain of custody of synthetic turf sports or playing fields installed in Maryland. These fields contain dangerous materials. The basic point is we just want to know where these things went and that the

materials were disposed of properly. This is about transparency.

■ Last year's Fiscal and Policy Note indicates only a \$52,400 cost for Fiscal Year 2024 and only \$13,800 for Fiscal Year 2025.

Last year HB131 passed the House of Delegates by a vote of 103 to 31 on March 10, 2023.

The mission of the MCCF is to preserve and improve the quality of life for all current and future residents of Montgomery County, Maryland. Since its founding in 1925, the volunteers of the MCCF have committed themselves to providing an effective citizen voice to government policy makers, both elected and appointed.

The Civic Federation is a not-for-profit, county-wide umbrella

## Garson Testimony, cont.

group designed to promote cooperation, education and effectiveness of civic and community associations in Montgomery County.

It addresses a wide range of concerns in transportation, land use, environment, education, budget and finance, public safety, and ethics. With its strength of numbers and thoroughness of its deliberations, the Federation influences County policy and balances the activities of vested county pressure groups.

Thank you for considering our views.

—Jerry Garson ■

## Minutes, General Meeting #950, February 12, 2024

*By Elizabeth Joyce, Acting Secretary*

**1. Call to Order.** The Zoom meeting was called to order by President Alan Bowser at 7:34 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda.** The agenda as amended was approved.

**3. Approval of Minutes.** The minutes for the January 8, 2024, meeting (#949) were approved.

### **4. Announcements:**

■ Chris Betti asked members to visit the website [www.simplidues.com](http://www.simplidues.com) to see if his membership and dues software would work for their neighborhood associations.

■ Peggy Dennis reported that the Montgomery County Department of

Transportation was considering the development of a volunteer program to combat invasive plants in the County's ROW.

### **5. Program: A Conversation with Gwen Wright: Housing Issues in Montgomery County.**

The former Montgomery County Planning Director discussed a range of housing issues facing Montgomery County and other jurisdictions in the Country. She noted that there was a severe shortage of housing of all kinds, but especially deeply affordable housing. She described a series of policy approaches to increase housing, including regulatory flexibility, financing options, innovative constructive techniques, accessory dwelling units, MPDUs,

## February Minutes, cont.

social housing, missing middle housing, and new State and Federal legislation under consideration to accelerate housing construction. She encouraged members to learn more about the County attainable housing assessment and attainable housing strategies by review these Planning Department webpages: [Housing Needs Assessment](#) and [Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative](#).

In the discussion that followed, members asked questions about adequate public facilities, shared housing, zoning capacity, land banking, preservation of existing affordable housing, colocation of affordable housing on public property, and issues related to tree canopy, heat islands, and stormwater management. (Links to the recorded meeting are on MCCF's website.)

### 6. Land Use and Planning

**Committee.** Upon motion, members approved the appointment of Cheryl Gannon and Elizabeth Joyce as co-chairs of the Land Use and Planning Committee. Upon motion, members approved the appointment of the following individuals to serve on a special subcommittee on housing issues: Cheryl Gannon, Elizabeth Joyce, Chris Reynolds, Genevieve McDowell Owen, Tony Byrne, Brenda Freeman, Joyce Gwadz, and Ken Markison.

### 7. State Legislation Bill 8-24.

Members discussed a local Montgomery County-only bill 8-24, proposed by District 20 Delegate David Moon that would declare that certain restrictions on use that prohibit the use of real property in Montgomery County for housing units otherwise authorized under law are void and

unenforceable. Members expressed concern that there was inadequate information provided about the bill and its potential impacts to County residents and commented that the current status of the bill and its language was unknown. Upon emergency motion, members voted that the Montgomery County Civic Federation should send an email to the full Montgomery County State Delegation requesting that the bill should be tabled until the next legislative session so the residents could get more information about the bill and its intent and have an opportunity to have a full discussion with Delegation members.

**8. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m. ■

## Executive Committee February 22, 2024, Minutes

**1. Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Alan Bowser. Members present: Alan Bowser, Elizabeth Joyce, Cheryl Gannon, Kim Persaud, and Jacquie Bokow.

**2. Review of February General Meeting.** Members discussed the February General meeting with featured speaker, Gwen Wright, former Montgomery County Planning Director. Members commented on the importance of having a constructive and respectful dialogue during the online meetings.

**3. State Legislation Bill 8-24.** Members discussed follow up to the State Delegation regarding a local Montgomery County-only bill 8-24, proposed by District 20 Delegate

David Moon that would declare that certain restrictions on use that prohibit the use of real property in Montgomery County for housing units otherwise authorized under law are void and unenforceable. An email suggesting that the legislation be tabled until the 2025 Legislative Session was sent to the Delegation, per the Federation vote.

**4. March General Meeting.** The March meeting will focus on the County's FY25 Recommended Operating Budget with guest speaker Richard Madaleno, the County's Chief Administrative Officer.

**5. Newsletter Submissions.** Articles for the newsletter are due by February 26. ■

## cfn

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