

## **Park Hills Civic Association General Meeting – Summary**

The Park Hills Civic Association held a General Meeting on **Thursday, December 6, 2007** at the Silver Spring International Middle School Library beginning at 7:00 pm. Attending: Linda Ashdown, Courtney Blenkinsop, Peter Blenkinsop, Bob Bor, Alan Bowser, Mildred Dickinson, Leslie Downey, Evelyn Foley, Heather Foley, Joe Foley, Barbara Galloway, Anne Gavin, Christine Keck, Chris Lourie, Sandy Kemper, Gary Klauber, Jim Preston, Chris Richardson, Diana Rowny, Carolyn Schick, Thomas Senko, Maury Silverman, Don Slater, Tina Slater, George Stephens, Jean Walker, and Dwight Wilson.

**Treasurer's Report.** Sandra Fair, PHCA Treasurer, who was unable to attend this meeting, reported a balance of \$507.65 in the prior General Meeting of the Civic Association. At least 90 households are paid members of the Park Hills Civic Association, plus several more who became new members at this meeting.

**Secretary's Report.** Chris Richardson, PHCA Secretary, reported that the previous PHCA General Meeting took place on September 27, 2007, while the Executive Committee recently met on November 18, 2007. Richardson also noted that membership on the Park Hills Civic Association listserv currently stands at 148. The Park Hills community includes approximately 325 residential households.

### **Old Business**

#### **527 Dale Drive.**

Two staff members from the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County - Lembit Jogi, Project Manager for the Renovation of the Dale Drive Apartments, and Barbara Galloway, Regional Manager for Housing – briefed Park Hills residents about the physical renovation of the 527 Dale Drive apartments that will soon begin serving as permanent supportive housing for eight single disabled adults who are exiting homelessness. Mr. Jogi said that there had initially been a delay in this project, as Montgomery County told HOC to seek additional sources of funding. Fortunately, with the assistance of a \$600,000 Maryland state Community Development Administration grant, \$50,000 from the Maryland Portable Housing Trust, plus \$200,000 in money and materials from the Homebuilders Association, among other things, HOC was then able to begin the renovation process. Mr. Jogi and Ms. Galloway answered questions about various programmatic aspects – such as oversight and accountability, resident screening, and quality of coverage – because Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, who provides case management services, did not send a representative to our meeting who might more fully address these concerns from the community. In any event, Park Hills residents were (and are) encouraged to read all the information posted on HOC's special web page dedicated to the Dale Drive Apartments, which includes resident selection criteria and a 33-question FAQ/project overview:

<http://www.hocmc.org/news/daledrive.asp>

Mr. Jogi stated that a full-time case manager will be on duty each weekday from 9:00-5:00, while a live-on person will work the 5:00-9:00 shift, as well as weekends. There is also an **emergency answering service** with a toll-free number: **800-274-1131**

HOC wanted to be sure to invite the Park Hills community to the **Open House** and ribbon cutting for the Dale Drive Apartments on **Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**. Ribbon cutting begins at 4:00, while the Open House officially begins at 5:00 pm.

### **Neighborhood Watch**

Alan Bowser reported that the Montgomery County Police Department and the Department of Public Works & Transportation have not responded to our request for Neighborhood Watch signs earlier this year. Follow up is underway. The Association will contact DPWT and MCDP about a traffic speed device for Dale Drive to address speeding on the road. The PHCA Neighborhood Watch program needs volunteers, and neighbors were - and are - urged to contact Alan Bowser by phone (301-608-3932) or by email ([abowser@starpower.net](mailto:abowser@starpower.net)).

### **Purple Line Developments.**

Chris Richardson, Chair of the PHCA Purple Line Task Force, briefed Association members on the highlights of the November Purple Line Task Force meeting, as well as some of the preliminary information being supplied by MTA at its recent Open House meetings. Richardson's slide show presentation has been posted on the Park Hills listserv (under the filename, Dec. 2007 Purple Line Report).

Richardson stressed that the Task Force will need to have greater clarity on the following concerns posted below before it can be expected to reach some sort of consensus at its next meeting – expected to take place in the early months of the new year:

- To what extent has MTA dialogued with the two public schools on Wayne Avenue – Sligo Creek Elementary and Silver Spring International Middle School – to solicit the concerns of parents, teachers and students with respect to pedestrian safety, traffic impacts, and parking issues?
- Given that light rail could run as frequently as every 8 minutes, pedestrian access across Wayne Avenue might need to be restricted due to public safety concerns – will there be a need to limit pedestrian access across Wayne? Are greater public safety measures needed for crossing the widest intersections, i.e., those with dedicated left-turn lanes, particularly at Dale Drive?
- With the loss of street parking on Wayne Avenue, where will parents attending major school functions, community members engaging in athletic events, or those attending events at the old Blair Auditorium be expected to park?

- To what extent will MTA mitigate against increased spillover and cut-through traffic on side streets due to the loss of lanes on Wayne Avenue?
- To what extent will MTA mitigate against noise as well as vibration impacts caused by either of the two modes of transport?
- What are the environmental impacts of a light rail system on the Sligo Creek ecosystem for each of the two East Silver Spring alignments?
- Will there be turning restrictions for those traveling on Wayne (away from downtown Silver Spring) who want to turn left on Springvale, Cloverfield, or Greenbrier?
- As noted in MTA's 2005 report, *Alternatives Analysis Initiation Package*, "all of the primary east-west travel routes are heavily congested during peak periods and on weekends and unable to accommodate increases in demand for east-west travel," with all of the major intersections listed receiving a grade of either E or F for Level of Service, then how can the Purple Line improve traffic and take cars off the road?
- To what extent has MTA considered **fully** studying below-grade alignment options (specifically tunneling and "cut and cover"), including without any underground stops, for the Purple Line running beneath Wayne Avenue, both from Fenton Street (connecting with the at-grade option from the Silver Spring Transit Center that is being studied) and from Cedar Street (connecting with the deep-tunneled option from the Silver Spring Transit Center that is being studied) to a point approximately 900 feet east of Sligo Creek Parkway?
- Additionally, has MTA considered **fully** studying underground options from Silver Spring Transit Center (traveling east toward Wayne) as a cost-effective means – i.e., reduced travel time, increased ridership – of reducing congestion in the notoriously gridlocked downtown zone encompassing Georgia Ave., Fenton St., Wayne Ave., and Colesville Road?
- Given the considerable impact of a *fifth* stream of traffic into an intersection - Fenton and Wayne - that is already unable to handle its present capacity, has MTA officially considered making the stop for the new public library **underground** so as to reduce as much as possible the footprint of the transit line on Fenton Village, a walking neighborhood?
- Given the impact of an at-grade light-rail system on Bonifant Street and its potentially adverse effects on the business community an (i.e., loss of on-street parking, property taking due to street widening, possible one-way traffic flow, reduced walkability and related pedestrian safety issues), what is the state of Maryland doing to assist the impacted shopowners?
- In MTA's recent Purple Line Fact Sheet, it states that "existing east-west bus services are unreliable and slow" – why then can't we implement various TSM techniques *right now* – such as improved bus service and synchronization of traffic signals to reduce congestion, et al. – instead of having to wait years for the Purple Line to be built?

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectively submitted.

Chris Richardson, PHCA Secretary.