

Park Hills Civic Association General Meeting -- Summary

October 22, 2015

Silver Spring International Middle School

Minutes

The quarterly meeting of the Park Hills Civic Association was held on Wednesday, October 22, 2015 at the Silver Spring International Middle School. There were about 23 attendees.

Secretary's report: Minutes of the 22 May meeting were read out.

Treasurer's report: The association currently has a balance of \$800.21 due to the cancelation of the annual picnic.

Sweep the Creek: Parkhills and the local cub scout group once again managed to clean a substantial part of the creek. Our thanks to all those involved, particularly our point person, Chris Richardson.

Signs for walk back to school: Alan Bowser and Chris Richardson placed signs up at the start of school to try and persuade drivers to be more vigilant in looking for school children crossing the road.

Community yard sale: The last community yard sale was considered a big success by those who attended. Bowser agreed to see if anyone was interested in running a similar sale in the spring.

Tree walk around: Fran Sussman organized a local arborist walked around and visited a number of neighbors on September 19 to discuss the current care and standard of trees in the area. This is particularly important considering the stress trees have been under with the temperature extremes experienced this year, and the proposed loss of tree habitat in the near future. The 15 or more neighbors who took advantage of his services were extremely pleased with both the advice and with the opportunity to talk with their neighbors on these issues.

Bowser represented Parkhills at a number of civic events during the summer. He also announced more details over our Thanksgiving parade walk for the November 21.

Main meeting event: Q&A with WSSC

WWSC's Brandon Stewart (customer advocate) and their contractor manager Curtis Pinder kindly came to the meeting to answer questions had regarding the sewer line work done by the creek.

Branson says that they appreciate that the projects can be time consuming and thank residents for their patience. He said they would be more than happy to come out and visit residents if they have other questions at a later date. To help speed things up, most of the following questions were collected in advance:

1. **What does WSSC do?** Water provider for the region's 1.8 million households. Main focus at the moment is replacing water and waste pipes of the aging infrastructure.
2. **What is WSSC doing in Sligo Creek Park? Why is this work necessary?** WWSC received a federal mandate to update the sewer system and the lines that go through the park. They have 5 years to replace the sanitary system. WWSC has nothing to do with waste water produced in the park or run-off from roads. They are relining the old sewer lines (using robot cameras to check whether this type of repair is suitable. Pipe that requires more maintenance is dug up and repaired. The black pipes seen all over the creek replaces the main lines when they are doing the relining.
3. **What is the construction schedule for the WSSC work in Sligo Creek Park; when will it be completed?** They are unsure how long it will take but they expect the work to potentially take another 3-4 years to complete the whole project.
4. **Does the WSSC work adversely affect the environment? What is the occasional strong odor near the WSSC work?** Its from the pipe relining and nothing to be concerned about.
5. **What is the lasting impact on the Creek, water quality and safety after the improvements** This work should improve and save the creek. Up until 1963 the storm system and the waste water could be merged into one. After that date they had to be separate. If they come across an old house with an issue as they are working they are also separating the lines as part of their repairs.
6. **Is Sligo Creek safe for families and pets?** Yes it is, but if you're walking along and you see machinery and equipment working, be cautious. If you do see something unsafe (i.e. equipment not roped off) look for the signs and call the contractor. Tel 301 206 4002 is the emergency number or call 311.
7. **How has the WSSC work in Sligo Creek been coordinated with Montgomery County agencies?** Parks and Recreation, Friends of the Creek are going to be working with WWSC to restore the area once they are done.
8. **Has WSSC coordinated with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and Maryland Transit Administration about the future Purple Line?** As of now we've had no knowledge or communication with dept of transportation over the purple line.
9. **Are there any new water/sewage line rehabilitation projects planned for our neighborhood?** One of the things their web site can provide <http://www.wsscwater.com> are links connected to work being done in your neighborhood which will tell you what phase of any project in and who to contact for further information.
10. **Is there a way to monitor the process online?** No. But the web site can tell you who to contact for more information. Moreover, signs near the work tells you what stage the project is in.
11. **How do you make complaints about overflows, discharges and odors near the WSSC work?** Visit the web site or use the contact number on the signs.
12. **Pinhole leaks.** Are still an ongoing problem in the neighborhood.

WSSC ended their contribution at this part of the meeting, stating they are willing to come back to Parkhills at a later date.

Park Hills/Wayne Ave Purple Line Task Force

Chris Richardson brought up the history of the migration options that were proposed for the Purple Line on Wayne Ave, and how five years later on, most of them were abandoned. Richardson talked about how he started a change.org campaign to ask for consideration of making sure if the purple line was going ahead to make sure the project was done right. Over 600 people signed the petition and it was extremely helpful in getting our local officials to pay attention to these issues while we waited for the governor to make a decision. Unfortunately, Jamie Raskin and Sheila ran out of time to get it onto the governor's purple line agenda. However, there was a meeting in which the two representatives were able to submit our resident's concerns to Joanna Conklin of MCDot.

Ike Leggett has been extremely helpful in creating a local advisory taskforce to look at some of the Purple Line concerns along Wayne Ave and seems engaged in listening to these concerns.

Richardson explained that the widening of the road expected at the corner of Wayne & Dale to seven lanes seems unnecessary and that alternative proposals were being put to MTA. There is confusion over who exactly wants to road widened.

MTA has taken ownership of this noise squeal based on this last meeting the wayne advisory group. However, most of the earlier proposals to limit wheel squeal have now been abandoned by MTA.

Richardson said that from Fenton to Silgo Creek Pwy it is very clear from the county engineers is that they expect the only crossings will be at the traffic lights. All the other crossings are highly likely to be banned. Richardson says we've been asking for clarity for years on what migration options would be available on Wayne Ave.

Richardson also reminded the room that Valerie Ervin said there was no current plan to upzone around Dale Station, but as we've seen by the Chelsea school zone change, residents shouldn't put too much faith in Ervin's statement as up zoning around Purple Line stations forms a significant part of the county master plan.

Bowser said he was more positive from the Oct 7 meeting but he pointed out that there may a special tax added to districts to help pay for the purple line.

The room was also reminded that significant cut through traffic is likely once construction starts on Wayne Ave, particularly on Mansfield Rd. Whether the cut through traffic continues will depend on how the Purple Line is constructed, and how efficient it is to use the Dale Ave junction by drivers.

Finally, it was pointed out that no one now knows what will happen with the Purple Line, as the contractors will be given wide latitude to alter the project in an attempt to cut costs.

At this point, the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Guinnessy