



CIVIC FEDERATION NEWS

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February 2001

A Region Divided

—by Chuck Lapinski

The Brookings Institution's policy report "A Region Divided" has raised questions about the breadth and complexities of the challenges of growth here in the Greater Washington, DC area. The report claims that we suffer divisions by race, income, jobs, and opportunity. Even the affluent "western" side of the area, according to the report, includes "pockets of poverty."

The program at our February meeting will look at the long-term implications on growth and the quality of life in our area. Chuck Lapinski will chair the program and the guest speakers will be Ms. Amy Liu and Robert Puentes, from the Brookings Institute Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, and the Authors of "A Region Divided—the State of Growth in Greater Washington, D.C."

Their initial results addressed the significant differences in policies among the jurisdictions in the region, and how these policies shaped the differences in income, schools, jobs, and transportation. In many respects it is an indirect assessment of what has transpired from the original "wedges and corridors" regional plans from the fifties and sixties, and how well they have been followed and what the effects are.

Many of us have seen most of the results in other briefings. What is different now, is that the team has had some time to reflect on the results and the characterization so that they could focus on the long term implications of the various policies and what the impacts are on growth and quality of life issues. Some of their initial thoughts are a little of what we might expect. But, most of what they see are not

only thought provoking, but also challenge our current perceptions and thinking. Simply, many of our well intended policies have some undesirable untended effects, but we have some limited time to try and change them.

What I most appreciated from the last open discussion and presentation they made last month, is the focus on the long-range implications of policies. And, no, I am not going to even give you any hints, or even an example. The characterization and the context of their study drove the results and preliminary conclusions. There are challenges and changes that must be made if we want more desirable results.

In summary, the region will continue to grow, and Montgomery County and the State of Maryland will grow with it. And if it chooses, it can lead the region in growth with the infrastructure and quality of life that we want.

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Delegate Meeting Minutes January 8, 2001

–by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

Meeting called to order by Peggy Dennis, MCCF vice-president, at 7:52 pm. 724th session of the MCCF.

Announcements and some introductions were made. Pedestrian safety generally discussed.

Agenda. New business: preservation of Dry Cleaning Institute added under new business. **Agenda approved by voice vote.**

Approval of Minutes from the November Delegates meeting postponed until the February meeting.

Program: 2001 Commission on the Future. Stan Schiff presides. MCCF will hold a Saturday forum on this topic at the end of March or early April.

Javier Miyares: November, 1999, 1st meeting of Commission. Three committees of the Commission. Commission chair was Robert Parilla, former president of Montgomery College. November 28, 2000 final report presented to the County Council consisting of topics including: 1) more people, 2) older, yet 3) more young people 4) more diverse, 5) more urban within the county.

Barbara Steckel (and committee). Studied the fiscal health of the County. They predict greater demand on the tax base: 30% business, 70% residential. 22% of children in MCPS qualify for free or reduced meals. Many have lost jobs, particularly from the federal government. However, biotechnology firms have flourished in the area.

Only way to "justify" the 93,000 acres of the current agricultural preserve is to keep it economically viable for farming. Farming contribute \$285 million to the County's economy. Biotech may help in agricultural endeavors.

Phyllis Newsome. Services committee reported on schools/higher education and seniors. This group developed some recommendations for MCPS including topics such as criminal issues, juvenile crime issues and the high probation caseload.

Javier Miyares. Committee members came from diverse backgrounds.

Land use. 1) planning–Wedges and corridors, promote future job growth along major transportation lines. 2) Should encourage more jobs along I-95 and US 29 routes. 3) Agricultural preserve must be economically viable, otherwise, the pressure to use the land for other purposes will increase.

Maintain existing communities. Action is needed to maintain and add to the supply of affordable housing. 4) County must preserve the viability of lower-income affordable housing (education, etc.) so that these neighborhoods do not deteriorate.

Environment. At issue: management of storm water runoff, particularly in the down county.

Transportation. Four recommendations: 1) land use tied to transportation. County needs to make decisions regarding transportation. Opposed to Potomac River crossing in western Montgomery County. Access to PG and Baltimore and BWI is important, hence the need for east-west transportation.

Cari Lamari. We have regional transportation problems.

Reports are available from the County's legislative information staff.

No known nominations for the District 5 vice president.

George Sauer moved **approval of President Ahmad's nomination of Bill Skinner as Parliamentarian.** Seconded. **Passes unanimously by voice vote.**

Cari Lamari moves that the **MCCF endorse Yale Weisberg for the open position on the Redistricting Committee.** Seconded. **Passes by voice vote with 2 opposed, 1 abstention.**

Storm Water management. Article about this issue on page 4 of the January MCCF Newsletter was authored by Cleo Tavani, not Bill Skinner. Charles Wolff moves to **table motion that MCCF support storm water management fees as opposed to a tax, including application to non-profits and**

government users issue until the next meeting. Seconded. Passes unanimously by voice vote.

Charles Lapinski moves **deferring bylaw amendments to the next meeting. Passes with one objection.**

[Text of proposed amendments:

First, that Article 6, Section 6 be amended by adding the underlined words as a new second sentence as follows:

6. *Vacancies.* The unexpired term of a vacancy in an elected position shall be filled by a special election at a Regular Meeting. Notice of the special election shall be placed in the newsletter one month ahead of the meeting at which the special election is to take place. The position will be assumed upon election.

Second, that Article 10, Section 5 be amended by adding the words "in May" as follows:

5. *Membership Committee.* This committee shall conduct membership drives, evaluate eligibility of applicants for membership, bill for (in May) and collect membership dues, transmit to the Treasurer all dues collected with identity of member and year, maintain the membership records, prepare Delegate and member mailing labels, and perform such other tasks as may be assigned by the Executive Committee.]

New business. Marcie Stickle and Mary Reardon, members of the Silver Spring Historical Society, and Montgomery Preservation, Inc. Speakers speak in favor of preserving the Dry Cleaning Institute at the corner of Georgia Avenue and East-West Highway as a historic building. Currently owned by Metro. It was a nationally recognized dry cleaning and dyeing arts school. Speakers seek MCCF support and getting the building on the historic buildings 'atlas,' which means it would be looked at carefully before it could be severely altered or demolished.

Meeting adjourns at 9:42 pm.
Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Zierdt, MCCF Recording Secretary

Ex-Comm Meeting Minutes

Dec. 14, 2000

—by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

Meeting called to order by MCCF president Dean Ahmad at 7:47 pm.

Announcements. SHA will speak before the County T&E committee.

Agenda adopted as amended. Minutes approved.

Treasurer's report. None presented. Steve Howie has submitted "many checks."

Financial Audit Committee. In progress.

Referendum Reform. Dick Strombotne. Moved that **ExCom make a favorable recommendation to the delegates on the motion on Referendum reform as published in the January 2001 newsletter. Passes unanimously on voice vote.**

[Text of motion on referendum reform:

- **Whereas**, the number of signatures needed to bring legislation passed by the County Government to referendum was originally one-fourth of the number needed for a charter amendment and now has increased to 2.2 times the number needed for a charter amendment, and
- **Whereas**, the original public policy was to make it easier for citizens to challenge new laws passed by the County Government than to change the Charter, and
- **Whereas**, with the growth of population it has gotten much harder to challenge new laws than to change the Charter, and
- **Whereas**, with the number of signatures needed to bring a charter amendment to the vote is 10,000 and the number needed for referendum is five percent of registered voters, and
- **Whereas**, many Montgomery County citizens have attempted to bring new issues to referendum for consideration by the voters

and have been frustrated by the extreme difficulty of doing so, and

- **Whereas** the Montgomery County Civic Federation has a membership that represents a large share of the county's citizens,
- **Therefore, be it resolved that** the Montgomery County Civic Federation will support and work for a charter amendment in the November, 2002, general election to reduce the number of signatures needed for a referendum to 10,000 from the current requirement of five percent of registered voters.]

Kingsley Wilderness Program. Steve Howie. Kingsley is a school for trouble youths. Site 30. School is under MCPS control. Steve will write article for the newsletter. There were procedural irregularities. School may not be consistent with historic site (1783 farm).

Political Campaigning on County Property/Time. Dean Ahmad. Dean has asked the County's attorney for a copy of the County's collective bargaining agreement.

Community Service Awards. Myrna Taylor. Victim Assistant Volunteers of the Abused Persons Program. This group has expressed appreciation for receiving an award from a civic, as opposed to political, organization. The group will be presented with award in February.

Dean submits Samira Hussein to receive the Community Hero Award in March. She has received numerous awards regarding multicultural understanding. **Selection passes unanimously by voice vote.**

MCCF Web Enhancements. Dean Ahmad. In progress.

Master Plan Process Reform. Dean met with Martin Klauber, People's Council. Bring ideas to Dean about citizen input or guidance (advisory) per master plan design.

Value/Variable Pricing on roads. Dan Wilhelm. State Highway Administration (SHA) has been holding workshops on this topic, wherein vehicles would be charged a toll/fee when using a road (or lane) within

certain times. Dan is initially against this as presenting an undo burden on economically pressed workers, among other reasons. One pricing workshop will be Tuesday, Jan 30, 5:30 - 8:30 Rockville High School.

Proposed bylaw change regarding member associations presidents. Peggy Dennis. Some member organization presidents choose not to be active MCCF delegates, yet MCCF bylaws require them to be so. Peggy will put a preliminary statement in the newsletter.

Programs. Peggy Dennis. **April delegate meeting: County operating budget.** Moved by Richard Zierdt, seconded by Dick Strombotne. **Passes unanimously by voice vote.** February: Brookings Institution report. Chuck Lapinski will try to get speakers. March: TPR (tentative). Also suggested was criminal justice / public safety topic (passes on voice vote), and the library system.

[By non-unanimous voice vote, rules are suspended to insert following topic:]

Forum topics. Stan Schiff. MCCF will sponsor a Saturday morning forum on the Commission on the Future. Passes unanimously on voice vote.

Education. MCPS Charter schools may be effectively moot.

Environment Committee. Charles Pritchard. MCCF to send letter to Park and Planning Chairman William Hussman in favor of P&P's acquisition of the Millard Property, which adjoins existing park property. This property is slightly over two acres on the east side of the railroad tracks adjacent to Garrett Park. Passes by voice vote.

[another comment on Programs:] Possible program on the proposed Second Potomac River Crossing. It was reasoned that MCCF should be informed about this topic before taking a position.

[back to agenda]

Legislative Committee. Dick Strombotne. Presents a Charter Amendment proposal regarding non-binding referendums, the results of which are advisory only. Dick will continue to explore this.

Membership. Jean Goldstein. Jean and Dean sent out dunning letter last Saturday reminding member associations to pay their dues. Several

associations called. Subsequent conversations were helpful.

Transportation. Charles Pritchard. Ramp meters have been proposed on I-95. Will acquire additional information.

Social Activities. Myrna Taylor. Some single participants felt that they were subsidizing participants who attended as couples, since the "couple" price was less than twice the single price. Dean states that MCCF volunteers should not be subjected to harassment, and any member who takes exception to how a volunteer handles an assignment should take it up with the President and, if he dislikes the President's ruling, appeal to the Executive Committee.

Public Finance Committee. Charles Lapinski. Operating budget. Affordability Guideline Review. May allow an additional \$15M.

Public Utilities Committee. Charles Lapinski. State law prohibits residential cooperatives from forming collectives for utility choice, yet organizations, businesses, etc, can. Motion to present this at the delegates meeting passes.

Stormwater Management Legislation. Charles Lapinski.

Charles Lapinsky asked whether the MCCF had published a budget and why it was not taken up at he September meeting. Ahmad said he look into the matter.

Home Depot. Richard Zierdt will write article for the MCCF newsletter.

White Flint. MCCF oppose funding of the Conference Center and spend the funds on intersection improvements. Amendment fails [4-4]. Original motion passes unanimously by show of hands. Favorable recommendation to the general assembly.

Meeting adjourned 10:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Zierdt, MCCF Recording Secretary

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

The MCCF will hold a workshop on the Commission on the Future on Saturday, April 7 in Rockville. Look for details in the next issue of this newsletter.

Bylaws Amendment Proposed for Approval

–by Peggy Dennis, First Vice President

Article II. Membership, paragraph 2, "Representation" stipulates that "the president of an association shall be the first representative named". While this makes some sense in that it insures that our newsletter will get to the top person in each association, in many respects it does not serve our interests well.

Article IV, "Delegates to Federation" states that a delegate "shall have a duty to participate fully in the deliberations and activities of the Federation, may vote on any issue before it, and may hold any Federation office or position". Too often our delegates who association presidents lack either the time or the inclination to actively participate. Other association members who would like to serve as delegates are kept from doing so by the incumbency of their president. This also means that we have fewer delegates who can take an active part in the federation year after year - less continuity.

In the interest of increasing the number of delegates who are willing and able to actively participate in the business of MCCF, I believe we should amend our by-laws to give greater flexibility to our member associations in this area. **I propose the following change in the last sentence of Article II. Membership, paragraph 2, Representation: The maximum number of representatives shall be four, and the president of the association shall be the first representative named unless he/she elects to appoint another association member to serve in his/her place.**

The Kingsley Wilderness Program: Portables Forever?

–Steve Howie, Second Vice President

For more than twenty years The Kingsley Wilderness Program, an innovative, outdoor-oriented approach to secondary education, has filled a special need within the Montgomery County Public School system. Enrolling 27 kids at any one time, this program has helped hundreds of troubled high school kids get their feet on the ground and finish their education. The Kingsley Program has won many awards and the hearts of practically everyone who has witnessed its work.

Since its inception, the Kingsley Program has operated on "Site 30" in rural Clarksburg. Site 30 originally included 100 acres designated as an historic district, home of the Moneysworth Farm with buildings dating back to 1783. The Kingsley Program originally operated in several, residential buildings on this site. Although the program had to be temporarily relocated and the portion of the site designated as "historic" scaled back to a mere 25 acres to accommodate construction of the Clarksburg jail, there was an understanding that Kingsley would eventually return to this location.

The Kingsley Program was designated as a suitable continued use for a renovated Moneysworth Farm - a vital aspect of maintaining and preserving the historic buildings. Indeed, the County has committed \$600,000 to restore the historic farmhouse, and all that was needed was some additional vocational education, classroom and administrative space. Several good plans were provided, but somewhere along the way good intentions collided with the parsimoniousness of the school system. During jail construction five portable classrooms were moved onto the historic site as a temporary place holders. Now, with the jail due to be completed soon and the program anxious to return to its original home, plans have surfaced to convert the portables into permanent facilities.

There are several things wrong with this plan. First, the portables will not provide the type of space needed by the Kingsley program. Second, portables cannot really be made aesthetically compatible with

an historic 18th century farm setting. Third, no matter what is done, the portables will still be portables. Its tenants will know they are occupying cheap, second-rate space and the school system will know it, too.

This precedent should alarm parents, teachers, and students all over the county. Up until now, portables—even obnoxiously long-lived ones - have been presumed to be temporary. The plan for Kingsley turns portables into permanent buildings.

Historic Moneysworth Farm has showpiece potential. Montgomery County Public Schools should make a capital investment in Kingsley proportional to its value as a program and as a suitable caretaker to an exceptional historic site.

Renew Now!

You are not too late to renew for the current year. Remember that according to our Bylaws, if you miss renewal this year you must pay TWO years dues to renew next year. Avoid that problem and renew NOW. Download a copy of the application form from our web site (www.montgomerycivic.org) to renew your association's membership to the Civic Federation. The Civic Federation is your means to effectively enhance and protect the quality of life in Montgomery County. Send your renewal to: Steve Howie, P.O.Box 325, Clarksburg, MD 20871.

Home Depot on Rockville Pike

*–by Richard Zierdt
Recording Secretary*

On January 6, 2001, Park and Planning approved case # 9-01003, "with conditions," the construction of a two-story Home Depot in North Bethesda, just south of and adjacent to the Rockville City boundary. The vote was 3-0, with Commissioners Perdue and Wellington "necessarily" absent. The building would be behind the "Gourmet Giant" shopping center, just north of the old Levitz store, and adjacent to the railroad tracks. Its address will be Nebel Street, on a section to be ultimately built between Randolph Road and Bou Avenue. However, only a portion off of

Bou is necessary to provide access to the building. The total store size (both floors) is 130,280 square feet, the size of a typical Home Depot.

On the face of it, one would think this project would exceed the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) standards, since traffic congestion on Rockville Pike is legendary. Unfortunately, this property falls under the "Loophole" category of the Ordinance. Loophole or not, Home Depot will be a automobile magnet. I anticipate no one taking public transportation to shop at this store.

This project is illustrative of how our public facilities deteriorate over time. Taken individually, as these projects are approved, each development seems fine. But taken collectively the situation becomes a disaster. Rockville Pike is the prime example of this phenomenon.

At the February Delegates Meeting, I will propose that **MCCF object to Park and Planning's approval of this project on the grounds that the surrounding roads are inadequate to the projected additional traffic that will result.**

District 5 Vice Presidency Remains Vacant

–I. Dean Ahmad, President

One elected position in the association still remains open. Although the current Bylaws permit the office to be filled at any time, I am going to schedule the next election according to the as yet unpassed Bylaw amendment on filling vacancies in elected positions, as courtesy. Thus, the special election to fill the vacancy for District 5 Vice President will be held at the **March meeting.**

Do we have your correct address?

Send all address correction
to Steve Howie

phone: 301-972-2736;
e-mail: stevehowie@aol.com

Community Heroes: Victim Abuse Volunteers

–by Myrna Taylor, District 3 Vice President

The Abused Persons Program which comes under the direction of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is a wonderful resource for victims of abuse and their families. The program offers a wide variety of services, including crisis hotline, emergency shelter, classes, support groups and counseling. Victim Assistants, some 35 volunteers at present, perform two incredibly important functions. These wonderful people—both men and women—staff the Domestic Violence office and window at the District Court, and serve as Court Companions for clients in both the District and the Circuit Courts.

The volunteers who staff the District Court Domestic Violence window provide information and referrals to persons seeking protection from abuse. They help the victim complete forms, explain the court process, and answer questions. When victims of domestic violence walk into the District Court House, they are usually traumatized and emotionally drained, and going to court can be a second trauma. The Victim Assistant volunteers at the Domestic Violence window provide the calm in the middle of the storm. They are gentle and caring, and offer both practical and emotional support during the initial court process.

The volunteers who serve as Court Companions accompany clients to both civil and criminal court hearings and to the police station when necessary. They offer emotional support, information and companionship throughout the process. While they never give legal advice or services, they act as advocates on behalf of the clients, helping them to stand up for their right to protect themselves from harm.

The Montgomery County Civic Federation is delighted to honor the Volunteer Victim Assistants by presenting them with the Community Hero Award at the February 12, 2001 Delegates Meeting. Each volunteer has donated time and love to a most important cause. We honor and thank each Victim Assistant Volunteer for her/his dedication, generosity, and most effective work.

Letters to the Editor

NAMI Requests Support From Civic Federation

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) of Montgomery County was honored to participate in the Community Forum on Mental Health Care sponsored by the Civic Federation on October 28, 2000. We found it very educational to hear from so many different community representatives. We were especially pleased to learn that the Civic Federation shares our concern for bettering the lives of citizens afflicted with serious mental illnesses.

Now is the time for many voices of our community to speak for the mentally ill who are homeless or in crisis and who cannot advocate for themselves. NAMI Montgomery County believes that forcing homeless persons, especially those with serious mental illness like schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder (manic depression), and major depression out of emergency shelters and onto the streets during the day is unconscionable and should no longer be tolerated. Fifty-four percent of homeless people in Montgomery County have serious mental illnesses. These are biologically based illnesses that are nobody's fault. Many of those who are homeless, are too confused to care for themselves and obtain treatment, which could restore them to stable productive lives. Without 24 hour shelter and on site case management they have no chance of recovery. Often, because of the untreated symptoms of their illness, they are arrested for minor infractions of the law. Some cannot figure out where to go to get out of the cold and may be arrested for loitering at businesses establishments. For shouting at the inner voices that torment them, they may be arrested for disturbing the peace. The result is that 18-20 per cent of inmates in the County jail have a serious mental illness. Warehousing the mentally ill in our jail costs the County approximately \$4,000,000 a year and does nothing to help these individuals towards recovery.

In addition, the operation of the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) which responds to mental illness crises such as suicide threats, operates for only 12 hours per day. Thus half of each day there is no appropriate emergency service for mental illness crises. The

police, who respond when the MCT is not operating, are sometimes unable to help. They do not have the professional mental health training of MCT staff on how to convince those suffering to get immediate evaluation and treatment. Also, unlike the MCT, police officers cannot require an immediate evaluation at a hospital ER. Police must personally witness an imminent threat to self or others before they can require such evaluation. Thus sometimes they must tell desperate families that there is no one that can help until the MCT comes on duty. By then it may be too late. Every year more Montgomery County citizens are lost to suicide than traffic accidents. We believe 24-hour operation of the MCT would save many of those lives.

NAMI Montgomery County submitted a request to the County Council to pass a supplemental appropriation for 24-hour emergency shelter with on site case management for the homeless and twenty-four hour operation of the Mobile Crisis Team. Year round funding would cost \$819,221.00.

A request by NAMI alone may not get the attention of the County Council. If the County Council receives letters supporting our request from other individuals and organizations, such as the Civic Federation, we believe they will take note of this critical life and death situation. We ask the Civic Federation to send such a letter supporting NAMI's supplemental appropriation request to the County Council.

In addition letters from individual citizens would also be very helpful. You could just send a brief message stating your support for full funding of NAMI Montgomery County's request for a supplemental appropriation for 24 hour emergency shelter with on-site case management and a 24 hour Mobile Crisis Team. If you have any reasons from your personal knowledge to add, this would make your letter even more powerful.

Put a request at the top of the letter that it be copied and sent to ALL council members. LETTERS to the County Council should be addressed to "Montgomery County Council", 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, Md. 20850. FAX: 240-777-7989. E-MAIL: county.council@co.mo.md.us (include full name & address).

–*Esther Kaleko-Kravitz*
Executive Director
NAMI, Montgomery County.

Silver Spring's National Dry Cleaning Institute Building

The Silver Spring Historical Society (SSHS) and Montgomery Preservation Inc. (MPI) are working together to preserve the National Dry Cleaning Institute (HDCI) buildings on Georgia Avenue at East-West Highway, just south of downtown Silver Spring. Constructed in 1927, the NDCI buildings were important in Silver Spring's rise to commercial prominence. They housed the national headquarters of a key trade and research organization that set national standards for the dry cleaning industry.

The yellow brick buildings have green Spanish tiled roofs, similar to the tiled roof of the National Geographic building in downtown Washington, which was designed by the same architect, Arthur Heaton. He was a prominent architect in our region, and his work is widely recognized. He also designed the Park and Shop strip in Cleveland Park, the prototype of other automobile-oriented shopping centers. Heaton was the first supervising architect for the National Cathedral, and was a leader in the 1930's of a major effort to restore D.C. structures and clear the slums.

SSHS and MPI are asking Montgomery Civic Federation and other civic organizations for support in preserving the Dry Cleaning Institute buildings. The strategy is twofold: 1) Let the County Executive know that these buildings are unique and important enough to preserve, and 2) Have civic groups commit to support listing the buildings on the County's Historic Atlas. The Atlas does not provide the level of protection that Historic Master Plan designation would bestow, but it does mean that the Historic Preservation Commission would have to be alerted before demolition or major external alteration could occur. That is, the buildings could not be demolished before serious consideration in a public forum.

*–Mary Reardon
Silver Spring Historical Society*

Oppose the Montrose Parkway

The proposed “Montrose Parkway” makes no sense for a number of reasons. First, the land needed to build such a road is not available. A large part of what was reserved for over 30 years as the straight

and wide “Rockville Facility Right Of Way” (RFROW) no longer exists. It has been used for construction. The area that is now being considered for this project is very narrow in some places and would require the demolition of a number of homes.

The County Executive’s assertion that the “Montrose Parkway will bring congestion relief, safety, and amenities” to the local area are highly questionable. Rockville Pike is already one of the most congested, gridlocked roads in Montgomery County, as any driver who uses it on a regular basis will tell you. The proposed parkway, by adding more lanes (there will be 9 total) to Montrose Road, will generate an even higher volume of traffic causing yet more congestion on Rockville Pike.

Local residents have good reason to disbelieve assertions that building the Parkway would improve public safety, especially if heavy trucks are permitted to use it. Pedestrian injuries and deaths are already a serious issue in Montgomery County. The entire area surrounding the Montrose Parkway is a fully developed residential community. Montrose Road is home to an elementary school (at the corner of Tildenwood) and a community swimming pool. Adults and children walk and ride bicycles to both school and pool, many crossing Montrose Road to reach these facilities. How can having nine lanes of even faster moving traffic fail to put a greater number of pedestrians at risk for serious or fatal injuries, especially local children.

These facts alone should give some pause to our Council members. But when it is time to review the budget, they should really sit up and take notice. The preliminary estimated cost of this project is sixty-three million dollars. As construction projects often far exceed their preliminary estimates, this project might reasonably be expected to cost over a hundred million dollars. Unlike many other road projects, the expense of building the Montrose Parkway will be born solely by county taxpayers. It will drain resources badly needed elsewhere. For instance, it has been suggested that this money could build one high school, or renovate and expand at least two middle schools such as the former Tilden Middle School or the Herbert Hoover Middle School in Potomac. And, as other civic leaders have noted, the allocation of those sixty-five or one hundred million dollars could be better used to build adequate gymnasiums in many of the county’s elementary schools which currently lack such facilities.

A better option for the North Bethesda/Rockville area than the proposed Montrose Parkway is the package of transit and traffic improvements that the State Highway Administration is currently proposing for the intersection of Montrose Road and Rockville Pike. These improvements, when coupled with local recommendations to improve the intersection of Montrose Road with Executive Boulevard and East Jefferson Street, would significantly improve traffic flow and public safety without encouraging more traffic moving at dangerously high speeds into the area. While the Montrose Parkway would be a profligate waste of taxpayer funds, this proposal would provide a better outcome for local residents and non-local drivers at a more modest and affordable price.

A final note to readers and especially our County government: the issue of transportation and congestion all around the North Bethesda/Rockville area, and around these well-established, beautiful neighborhoods, dates back many years. The last decade has brought many ill-advised developments into the wrong places. The safety and quality of life of local residents has repeatedly taken second place to the interests of a few big developers. The people who live around Montrose Road will continue to fight this battle, for the proposed Montrose Parkway will waste public resources which could be better spent elsewhere, adversely affect those who must drive through the area, and further erode the safety and quality of life of those of us who live here.

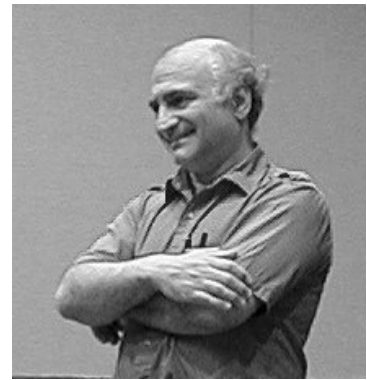
*–Fifa Northrup
Old Farm Civic Association*

From the President

The ice that kept so many away from our January meeting resulted in the deferment of potentially controversial issues until our upcoming February meeting. We have reprinted the text of the proposed Bylaws change and the motion on Storm Water Management Fees vs. Taxes, but I encourage you all to go back to the January issue of our newsletter and re-read the discussion provided there.

This is proving to be a successful year for the Federation in terms of getting action on the positions

we have taken. Among our successes: we stopped the attempted reversal of the County's strong openness in government rules; the tenant's right of first refusal statute has been extended, and the law to keep tobacco products in retail outlets out of reach of underage shoplifters was passed.



You will recall that in the last few months there has been a small storm of controversy over the proposal to privatize a road in Bethesda order to build in the air rights over the road. Thanks to the alert response of one of our constituent groups in Friendship Heights, we learned that one of the consequences of the privatization would have been an increase in the allotted density of the development. The developers have since withdrawn the request for the road abandonment.

Our program for the February meeting will be an examination of the Brookings Institute's report that this area is "A Region Divided." (See article on page 1.) The report finds that growth has come about at a cost of traffic congestion, school overcrowding, and other problems that affect the quality of life. This is a discussion that all our members should want to be a part of.

One of the great successes in the past of the Civic Federation was to draw attention to the flaws in the implementation of the County's Master planning process at the Board of Appeals level. I believe the time is approaching for us to make an equally comprehensive examination of the master plan process itself. Instead of playing different constituencies against one another in a political fashion, a growing number of people feel that the planning process can be turned in to a constructive method for protecting the interests of all parties. What problems has your community experienced with the planning process? How would you like to see it improved? I would like us all to begin thinking about such things now and I invite you to share your views by contacting me directly or by submitting letters to the editor of this newsletter.

2000-2001 MCCF Officers and Committee Chairs

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1st Vice-Pres.:	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	same	<not available>	hotyakker@aol.com
2nd Vice-Pres.:	Stanley D. Schiff	301-530-6455	same	<not available>	<none>
2nd Vice-Pres.:	Jeanne Goldstein	301-652-3064	same	<not available>	<none>
2nd Vice-Pres.:	Steve Howie	301-972-2736	same	<not available>	stevehowie@aol.com
2nd Vice-Pres.:	Dan Wilhem	301-384-2698	same	<not available>	djwilhelm@erols.com
Treasurer:	Chris Suzich	301-417-9522	same	<not available>	jcsuzich@juno.com
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Dist. 2 V.P.:	Dick Strombotne	301-540-9597	<not available>	<not available>	<not available>
Dist. 3 V.P.:	Myrna Taylor	301-869-4499	same	<not available>	<not available>
Dist. 4 V.P.:	Robert Creager	301-890-4326	301-918-9226	<not available>	<not available>
Dist. 5 V.P.:	<Vacant>				
Historian:	Marcella Petree	301-384-1776	same	<not available>	<none>
Newsletter Ed.:	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	same	<not available>	hotyakker@aol.com
Parliamentarian:	William Skinner	301-762-5483	301-762-3784	301-762-3786	wjswtg@aol.com
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Environment:	Charlie Pritchard	301-593-1781	same	<not available>	erc69434@aolcom
Legislation:	George Sauer	301-762-7260	same	<not available>	<none>
Membership:	Jeanne Goldstein	301-652-3064	same	<not available>	<none>
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Transportation:	Dan Wilhem	301-384-2698	same	<not available>	djwilhelm@erols.com

Another month has passed without our finding a District 5 Vice-President, our only remaining vacancy on the Executive Committee. I hope someone will volunteer or make some suggestions to me before the next scheduled special election in March.

This month we are honoring as community heroes some volunteers who spend their time making life easier for abused women (see p. 7). I would like to take this opportunity to thank our own heroes, the volunteers of the Civic Federation who put in so much time and effort for their own civic associations as well as for the Federation itself. Remember that like you, every one of us is doing this out of their devotion to our mission. Accordingly, if you dislike the way a committee chairman is doing something, and they don't seem to appreciate your perspective on how it could be done better, please don't give them a hard time. You can bring your suggestions to me and if I don't seem to appreciate them either then you can appeal to the Executive Committee and if necessary to the delegates assembly. Remember the golden rule and treat the other volunteers as you yourself wish to be treated.

–I. Dean Ahmad, Ph.D.

Think about it...

You have just read one of the most thorough and accurate newsletters in the County. For 75 years, elected officials, community leaders, citizens and journalists have relied on the Civic Federation News as an authoritative source of citizen's concerns and expectations.

Whether it is environmental issues, traffic congestion, ethics in government, unmet social needs, schools or land use, the **Civic Federation News** provides you with timely and accurate information. Join the Civic Federation today. With the exception of giving your own time and energy, it is the best investment you can make for your community.

Call Dean Ahmad at 301-951-0539 for more information.

Delegates Meeting

Monday, February 12–7:45 p.m.

First Floor Auditorium

County Council Office Building, Rockville, MD

AGENDA:

- 7:45 Call to Order, I. Dean Ahmad presiding
7:46 Announcements, Introductions
7:52 Adoption of Agenda
7:55 Approval of Minutes, Officers' Reports
8:00 Community Heroes: Victim Abuse Volunteers (p. 7)
8:10 Program: A Region Divided (p.1)
- Chuck Lapinski, Moderator
 - Amy Liu (Brookings Institute)
 - Robert Puentes (Brookings Institute)
- 8:45 Question and Answer
9:05 Old Business
- Storm Water Management Fee (p. 2)
 - Bylaw amendments (p. 3)
- 9:20 New Business
- Bylaws Amendment (p. 2)
 - Referendum Reform (p. 3)
 - Home Depot on Rockville Pike (p. 6)
 - Drycleaning Institute (p. 9)
- 9:55 Adjourn

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation**, a nonprofit, educational, and advocacy countywide group, was founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. The monthly Delegates Meeting is open to the public and it is held on the second Monday of each month (except for holidays, July, August and December) at 8:00 p.m. in the First Floor Auditorium, County Office Building, Rockville, MD.

The **Civic Federation News** is published monthly. It is mailed to Delegates; associate members; news media, and local, state, and federal officials. Permission is granted to reprint any article provided proper credit is given to the "*Civic Federation News* of the Montgomery County Civic Federation." Deadline for submissions is the last Monday of the month before publication. Attach submission to e-mail to: deanahmad@yahoo.com

Please send all address corrections to Steve Howie, P.O.Box 325, Clarksburg, MD 20871, 301-972-2736, stevehowie@aol.com.

Next Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 22, 2001, 7:45 p.m.

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center

4805 Edgemoor Lane in downtown Bethesda

(Note: there are two entrances to the parking garage—one on Edgemoor Lane and another on Woodmont Avenue.)

Montgomery County Civic Federation

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