



CIVIC FEDERATION NEWS

Official Publication of the Montgomery County Civic Federation
Serving the Public Interest Since 1925

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OCTOBER 2003

OCTOBER 13 DELEGATES MEETING PROGRAM

A DIALOGUE WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS ON THE AGP

By Cary Lamari, President

The Montgomery County Council will soon be making one of the most important decisions in their election cycle (see President's message, page 5), changes to the Annual Growth Policy (AGP), the process that will regulate future growth throughout the county. The Planning Board has made recommendations to the Council, and just about everyone in the development community has joined in the debate telling the Council what they think should be done. To date, however, there has been little discussion on this issue between citizens and policy makers.

I have invited several Council members to come and give us their personal perspectives on the proposed changes to the AGP. Phil Andrews, Tom Perez, and Marilyn Praisner have graciously agreed to participate. They will also field questions from the audience giving us a unique opportunity to carry on a dialogue with our legislators. Please plan on attending the October 13th meeting to learn, discuss and make your opinions known to our elected officials.

October's Community Hero

EVELYN BURTON

By Peggy Dennis, Newsletter Editor

For years, Evelyn Burton has been an advocate for individuals with mental illness in Montgomery County and further afield. A long time member, last year Evelyn served as president of the Montgomery County chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) and worked tirelessly in the fight to save Chestnut Lodge, our county's only residential psychiatric treatment facility. She also worked hard with NAMI-Maryland to change our state's commitment laws. Currently Evelyn heads the chapter's Advocacy Committee and works to improve access to mental health services for all county residents.

As the parent of a child with ADD and clinical depression, I have every reason to know how much her work means to those with mental illness and their families. Her efforts clearly make this county a better place to live and she should be a role model for all of us. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute, therefore, than to proclaim Evelyn Burton our Community Hero for October.

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RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PUBLIC FINANCING FOR CAMPAIGNS

Despite the efforts of Mr. Samples of the CATO Institute at our September program to persuade us that public financing of election campaigns is unpopular, I think many of us believe, based on personal experience and the hard facts, that public financing offers a real and positive alternative to our present system. I am therefore offering the following resolution to be discussed and voted on at the October regular meeting:

(continued on Page 2)

From Page 1 – Public Financing Resolution

“Be it resolved that the Federation endorses, in principle, the system of voluntary public financing for election campaigns at the state and local level as proposed by Public Campaign, and that the Federation will support and work with Common Cause Maryland and Progressive Maryland to promote this objective in the State of Maryland.”

OUR EMAIL SERVICES ARE IMPROVING

There has been a marked improvement in the efficiency and succinctness of our messaging activities. We have worked hard to observe proper email etiquette when addressing the Federation and it shows. But we are still broadcasting information that should be restricted to a few people. This is really a form of SPAM that we need to get rid of. Let's stop indiscriminate mailing.

Email is a rapid mass communication system, but it can be easily abused. Sometimes it is not what one says, but how one says it. Please think carefully what you are trying to accomplish before you hit the “send” button. Just as spoken words, an email message once sent cannot be retrieved.

SENTINEL'S FEDERATION CORNER

AN ACTIVIST'S FORUM

By Cary Lamari, President

Residents of Montgomery County too often find themselves wondering how and where they can express their viewpoints so they can influence public policy, especially when their perspective differs from that of their elected officials. The influence of special interest groups often outweighs that of average citizens, whether in hearings before government agencies such as the Park and Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals or in getting opinions published in certain influential newspapers. These invisible barriers have limited the ability of individuals and communities to have their fair say on many county government proposals that impact their lives such as new roads and other transportation “solutions”, special exceptions, and now, more growth justified as politically correct “affordable housing.”

The Sentinel Newspapers have offered the Montgomery County Civic Federation an opportunity to

correct this imbalance by providing us with weekly space to be called “The Federation Corner”. This will serve as an open forum for the opinions of both our Federation leaders and officers of our member associations. The viewpoints expressed will be those of the Federation, only if expressly approved by the Federation. The viewpoints of other member associations will be just that. Anyone from our member associations who wishes to submit a piece for “The Federation Corner” should contact the Federation's liaison with the Sentinel Newspapers, Alyce Ortuzar at 301-774-6617. I would like to thank the Sentinel Newspapers for providing our affiliated community organizations with this great new venue for airing their concerns.

The Sentinel Newspapers have also asked that we publicize their “Newspapers in Education” program. This program offers *The Sentinel* free to classes in the Montgomery County Schools. In addition, there are four pages just for kids each week and a creative contest each month. To encourage youth participation, student articles are solicited for publication and school news is welcome. This program is sponsored by Partners in Education, a 501(c)(3) foundation. They are currently collecting gently used books for a book sale in support of the foundation. They can pick up your donation or accept drop-offs at the barrel located at The Sentinel, 30 Courthouse Square, Suite 405 in Rockville. *The Sentinel* is also partnering with the Washington Redskins Leadership Council and their Community Service Initiative. The paper would like to suggest project ideas in the youth section to support this initiative.

Please send questions, ideas and comments to: Teresa Sadeghin, Youth Services Director, The Sentinel Newspapers at sentinelkids@yahoo.com or call 301-306-9500.

ANNOUNCEMENT

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Lyle Schofield, a delegate from the Norbeck Citizens Association, has volunteered to serve as Corresponding Secretary, a position currently vacant. In accordance with Article VI, paragraph 6 of the By-Laws, a Special Election to fill this position will be held in November.

A TAXING ISSUE

By Dan Wilhelm, First Vice President

The Council is now holding work sessions on the Planning Board's proposal to replace most of the Annual Growth Policy (AGP) current policies and procedures. I fear that the Council, and for that matter almost everyone else, is failing to address the amount of citizens' tax money that will be required. This article will address the needed taxes.

TABLE I. COSTS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD BE APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD AND THE ESTIMATED DEVELOPMENT THAT ROCKVILLE AND GAITHERSBURG WOULD APPROVE (IN \$MILLIONS)

TRANSPORTATION - NEW APPROVALS (ANNUAL)			
	COUNTY	STATE	TOTAL
COST OF REQUIRED INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT NEW DEVELOPMENT (\$26K/JOB-HOUSE)	\$37M	\$299M	\$336M
IMPACT TAX COLLECTED	- \$20M	- 0 -	- \$20M
TAXPAYER CONTRIBUTION	\$17M	\$299M	\$316M
TRANSPORTATION - ALREADY APPROVED/BUILT (TOTAL BACKLOG)			
	COUNTY	STATE	TOTAL
INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE PIPELINE	\$250	\$2,030M	\$2,280M
INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG FOR CONGESTION	\$1,000M	\$6,400M	\$7,400M
SCHOOLS - NEW APPROVALS (ANNUAL)			
	DEVELOPMENT	TURN-OVER	TOTAL
COST FOR NEW BUILDINGS	\$26M	\$104M	\$130
TAX (IMPACT/RECORDATION)	- \$20M	- \$23M	- \$43M
TAXPAYER FUNDED	\$6M	\$81M	\$87M
SCHOOLS - ALREADY APPROVED/BUILT (TOTAL BACKLOG)			
	DEVELOPMENT	TURN-OVER	TOTAL
INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE PIPELINE	\$136M		\$136M
INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT 632 TRAILERS			\$175M

The focus of the debates implies that all these taxes would come from the County taxing sources. As shown in the table, most of the transportation taxes are actually a state (including federal) responsibility. The state also provides some of the funds for school infrastructure. Little is heard at the state level about providing these needed funds. In fact, this year the Governor used much of the transportation trust fund for non-transportation purposes.

One of the big issues before the Council is whether the impact taxes should be applied to already approved "pipeline" development. This development would produce 31,111 housing units and 125,578 jobs. It is a shared expectation that not all of these developments will be constructed but the amount that will not be built is debatable. For the purposes of the table below, I have assumed development will occur that will produce 80% of the houses and 50% of the jobs. The

county and state together need to provide \$2.3B for transportation and \$136M for schools to support the “pipeline development”. These funds would be needed over a number of years. Depending upon what the Council decides, some of the funds could come from impact taxes.

The discussion so far has been on what funds are needed to support new growth or approved but yet-to-be-built development. We all know that additional funds are needed to address existing transportation congestion and school crowding. In the area of transportation, the executive’s *Go Montgomery* program calls for \$10B and the Council program calls for \$7.4B over the next 10 years to address congestion. I have estimated that \$175M is needed for schools just to replace the 682 trailers currently in use.

The information in Table I doesn’t include the infrastructure needed for affordable housing, economic development or federal projects. Additional funds would be needed for these projects. The table is based upon many assumptions, many of which are debatable. As such, take the dollars to be estimates and realize that the actual costs could be lower or higher. No matter what the exact numbers turn out to be, the message will not change. The message is that, in addition to development impact taxes, at whatever level the Council decides, much more revenue will be needed from tax payers; from businesses and from residents who pay income, property and sales taxes in Montgomery County. Also, if the Council decides not to impose an annual growth cap and allows more development, the need for more tax revenue will be even greater. It is questionable whether the county and state will find the funds needed to pay for new development, much less provide funds to reduce current congestion and crowding. The congestion and crowding has been allowed to develop over many years in part because the funds for needed infrastructure were not provided year by year as the problems accrued.

DELEGATES MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 8, 2003

—by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF Recording Secretary, Richard Zierdt sets up shop at 8:37 PM. The program on public financing of elections is well under way with Q&As in progress. John Samples of the CATO Institute: public financing of elections is very unpopular. Luella Mast: reduce the cost of campaigns; free air time to candidates. Dean Ahmad: objects to publicly financing the campaign of those he does not support.

Dale Tibbitts: The MCCF Electoral Reform subcommittee has recommended 9 local County Council members and no at-large members. Committee will look into a petition (10,000 (valid) signatures are required) to get this into referendum.

Dick Kauffunger. Now is the time to make recommendations to the Charter Review Commission.

Dan Wilhelm. Annual Growth Policy. Dan generally supports a proposal the Planning Board has developed to replace the “traditional” AGP. Dan recommends a maximum cap of 1% annual growth for all development. Q: Could the impact tax be tempered with the areas that

are affected more than others, particularly schools? Marvin: who will ensure that codified law is enforced? Stan Schiff: This issue is too complicated to be considered now. We have until the end of October. Do not be mesmerized by the 1% figure which lasts for 2 years only. Dean: Be wary of the exception for “economic growth.” What else could become an “exception?” Jerry: LATR rules are mathematically impossible to achieve. Jim: The 1% applies to permits, not actual development. Stan: regional and Rockville/Gaithersburg growth and planning have an effect on the rest of Montgomery County. Dan: Nothing will be perfect, but cannot be worse than the present system. Dan moves MCCF approve points 1 and 2 on page 5, second column, of the September Newsletter which (1) limits development to 1% per year, and (2) links the AGP to the County’s CIP, and the State’s CIP. Seconded. Nancy Floreen: get answers to questions from the Planning Board. Stan moves to table until after the public hearing. Seconded. Motion fails 13-15-2. Original motion then passes 19-6-6.

Transportation policies. Dan Wilhelm. Balanced land use between jobs and housing. Dan moves approval of points 1, 2, and 3 on page 6, column 1, September Newsletter (The MCCF supports efforts to (1) Improve balance between jobs and housing within the regions of the County; (2) Organize growth around transit nodes, both rail and bus; and (3) Reduce growth in rural and outer low-density suburban areas.) Seconded. Luella Mast:

opposes motion. Will people move when they change jobs? Chuck Lapinski. Motion is well-intentioned, but will not affect people's behavior. Q: When the types of jobs are not considered, the motion is not effective. Stan: We cannot spend our way out of congestion, but we can encourage job and residential placement. This motion makes imminent sense. Jim: the infrastructure is already in complete failure. Motion fails 13-14-1.

Marvin Weinman, President of Montgomery County Taxpayers League. Distributes and explains that group's September 2003 newsletter.

Treasurer's Report. Luella Mast. We are saving on communication costs (newsletter, postage expenses, more volunteers). Luella moves acceptance of the budget as printed in the September Newsletter on page 2. Richard moves an amendment that \$200 be allocated for legal expense support for those efforts by some MCCF delegates who challenge certain County policies in court. Seconded. Some feel this opens a can of worms: how would the money be allocated? Amendment fails 8-9-3. Original budget motion then passes 23-0-0.

Chuck Lapinski. Finance committee. A 5- to 10-cent per gallon gas tax increase may pass.

MCCF President Cary Lamari recommends Rosie Poole for membership chair. Appointment passes 21-0-0.

George Sauer moves that the MCCF offer and make Alice Ortuzar the MCCF liaison for a "Montgomery Column" in the MC Sentinel (local weekly newspaper). Motion passes 21-0-0.

Theresa Sadeghin, Youth Services Director for the Sentinel Newspapers: MC Sentinel provides a 4-page education section in their weekly paper. This material is available to all teachers in the County; please pass the word. They are also partnering with the Redskins to promote community service projects.

Bylaws amendment. Luella Mast moves that the last sentence in Article III, section 3 be deleted: "An association dropped for non-payment of dues may rejoin the Federation only upon payment of one year's back dues." Peggy Dennis: the present clause discourages member organizations from joining except only when it has a particular issue. Charles Wolff: a better policy would be to allow delinquent organizations to join without financial penalty, but not vote for three months. Dick Kauffunger feels the time has come to drop this requirement. Dean: the seven-month grace period is too

long and should be reduced. Dean moves that the bylaw change be referred to the by-laws committee. Passes 11-7-1.

Committee for Montgomery (CFM). Cary Lamari, Luella Mast. CFM, of which MCCF is a member, does not take positions unless 85% of its members agree. CFM will vote on Tuesday, October 7, 2003 on whether the CFM should support the Coalition for Public School Funding (Thorton Commission funding formula). Chuck estimates this could cost \$800-1000 in additional taxes. Cary: Montgomery County has benefited from the formula. Motion fails 5-6-6.

Bob Goldberg. PIF = Private Institutional Facility. What PIFs can connect to a sewer line? Raises issue of possible encroachment into the Agricultural Reserve. Email / Phone number is r.n.goldberg@att.net 301-540-2915.

Meeting is adjourned 10:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

- By Cary Lamari

I would like to thank all of you for your comforting words and expressions of sympathy with respect to the passing of my father. It is times like these when we realize just why we work so hard as civic activists. Your sympathy and support in my time of personal loss was an immense help.

We need to focus our attention now on what I believe will be the most important decision the Montgomery County Council will make in this election cycle; changes to the Annual Growth Policy (AGP). Our land use and planning process and the AGP that governs it used to be the envy of the nation – a nationally recognized and admired system to manage development and growth while retaining and even improving the quality of life of our residents. The old growth policy, even with its deficiencies, imposed building moratoriums in areas that lacked adequate school capacity (however not as often as it should have) and transportation infrastructure and where improvements could not be provided in a timely manner.

After years of pandering to developers and manipulating the land use process, the AGP has become a toothless, ineffective document. The rate of growth has gotten out of hand. Excessive development is already straining schools and roads throughout the county. We seem to lack either the financial resources or the political will (maybe both) to correct the deficiencies in our public infrastructure much less accelerate building to accommodate additional future growth.

The current council is considering, in the name of “affordable housing”, allowing developers to build more housing units and increase densities county-wide beyond those projected in our master plans and provided for by our present infrastructure. The council is considering steps that would take us back to the failed policy called “Pay and Go” which has and still is creating havoc in many parts of the county. “Pay and Go” allowed developers to pay a small fee and go forward with their developments despite inadequate infrastructure. We cannot allow this to occur any longer. At the very least we must require this government to cap new development to levels of growth that are sustainable. This will allow government time to catch up with the lack of infrastructure. It is time we the citizens demand honest and effective planning.

And speaking of inadequate infrastructure, you need only reflect on recent power outages to understand the consequences of inadequate infrastructure. The Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) has just gone through a major test, and in my opinion failed miserably. Hurricane Isabel was a big storm, however it was forecast days in advance allowing ample time for both consumers and the utility company to prepare. What we saw was a severe breakdown in the power distribution network across the region. Speaking as a professional electrical contractor, this breakdown should never have been allowed to occur. The power distribution network is aging and is being taxed by over-development with few upgrades being implemented. When we redo our roads we should simultaneously be upgrading our distribution network by installing underground duct-ways and electrical networking beneath the road surface.

A few years ago the power companies were deregulated, and what we saw was our local power company placing emphasis on generating profits for its shareholders rather than electricity. They sold off their power generation portion of their company because it wasn't profitable. This is not unusual for private business and you can't blame them for trying to make a profit. But have the benefits of deregulation been outweighed by the loss of

efficient and dependable customer service? Power outages seem increasingly frequent and of longer duration. Schools were closed for almost a week. Businesses and governments were forced to close. Workers were forced to stay home or, with public transit closed down, endure impossibly long and dangerous commutes. The homebound elderly, and those with live threatening conditions suffered severely and could even die because of the prolonged power outage. Homeowners lost hundreds of dollars worth of perishable foodstuffs because PEPCO wasn't prepared to distribute dry ice efficiently and reliably. Residents who come from third world countries compare unfavorably PEPCO's ability to recover after a hurricane to that of the power suppliers in places like Dacca and Trinidad.

Are high maintenance standards and infrastructure upgrading being sacrificed for profits? Many people think so. I believe there must be an investigation of PEPCO. Our elected officials should have PEPCO reviewed and a report be prepared for the County Council and General Assembly to see if there is sufficient routine maintenance, structural upgrading needs, and adequate emergency preparedness and response. I also believe PEPCO should be held responsible for all losses to personal property as a result of their massive failure.

I would like to leave you with something my father used to tell me about politicians. He said, “When a politician is green he is ripe, but when he is ripe he is rotten.” My father meant that when a politician is new to office he will do anything he can to enhance his standing with those that elected him. But when a politician has been in office for a while he becomes self-serving. His main concern becomes staying in office and doing whatever he must do to protect his job. I think we need to remind our elected officials that we elect them and that we have the votes to give to others who will better serve our interests.

DELEGATES MEETING MINUTES JUNE 9, 2003

—by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF President Cary Lamari begins meeting at 7:50.

Sentinel Award is presented to Neighbors for a Better Montgomery. Council member Phil Andrews makes the presentation and congratulates Neighbors for much work in such a short period of time. Tom DeGraba speaks; Dan

Tuten speaks, as does Rosie Poole. *Gazette Award* is given to the ARC of Montgomery County, Brian Frosh presenting. The ARC has provided services for 45 years. Council member Tom Perez assists Cary in awarding the *Star Cup* to Jorge Ribas and Dan Wilhelm; Jorge for his efforts, among others, in extending record participation in the MCCF, and Dan for his long-term efforts in transportation studies.

Announcements. MCCF will hold a special 3 hour meeting on Transportation Policy Issues Saturday, June 14 at 9:30 am. League of Women Voters on Sept 18 will hold a tour of Montgomery County.

Agenda is adopted.

Election of vice president from the 1st district. Fifa Northrup speaks about her candidacy. Jim Humphrey speaks about his. Grew up on Elm Street in Bethesda. Edgemore Citizens Association. October 2001 a civic activist was borne. Wants to get more delegates involved. Q&A. Enid Miles. Will Fifa work to revamp zoning laws? Schools, fire, library infrastructure is failing... Fifa: public health is failing... Testified before Mr. Tierney against the Conference Center. Fought the Montrose Parkway. Zoning is a problem. Jim: explains some zoning complexities. Too complex, as opposed to simple Euclidian zoning. Q: How will candidates build membership in district 1? Jim: will use membership lists and make phone calls to build membership. Fifa: membership letters were sent to all civic associations.

Civil Liberties. Dean Ahmad argues in favor of resolution. Richard Zierdt thanks Dean for adding specifics. Richard Zierdt makes an amendment to remove the 4th Whereas clause “many communities...” should be removed (page 11, 1st column). Seconded. Amendment fails 10-19-0. Some feel the motion is silly and will have no effect. Others feel it is necessary to remind governments not to intrude on civil rights. Full motion passes 26-10-8.

Electronic mail. Richard Zierdt moves that the MCCF continue its program of distributing the newsletter electronically to delegates of those member Associations that request it until the delegates affirmatively vote to end it. Cary moves a substitute motion that all delegates receive both an email and hardcopy for one year and remove the electronic discount for one year. Seconded. Peggy wonders about the cost, since all will receive it. Dick: this amounts to a dues increase. ?(someone): finds it easier to find things on the computer, as opposed to paper. Dean: dues reduction in exchange for electronic

distribution benefits the MCCF. Which “one year?” MCCF has a contractual obligation to those who have already sent their dues. Substitute motion fails. Original motion passes.

Electoral Committee. Dale Tibbitts. Committee continues to work and will present a report in September.

Olney Master Plan. Ken Cusick, Williamsburg Village Civic Association. Reuse of a public school property on Georgia Avenue (another school would be built). Moves that the MCCF’s zoning and land use committee and housing committee review the Planning Board’s idea of relocating the school. Passes unanimously.

Slate of officers is voted in. Jim Humphrey is elected vice-president from 1st district, 33-17.

Meeting is adjourned 10:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Zierdt

EXCOMM MEETING MINUTES JUNE 19, 2003

—by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

[Dean Ahmad substitutes for Richard Zierdt until 8:19 PM]

MCCF President, Cary Lamari, calls meeting to order at 7:45 pm. Agenda accepted.

Treasurer’s report. Newsletter printing will rise to 4.8 cents/page.

Cary moves to appoint Rosey Poole as new Membership chair, and requests an election to fill vacant post of Corresponding Secretary. Lyle Schofield has offered to serve. Cary asked for a straw vote for a one-time dues amnesty. Sentiment was favorable, 7-3. Cary asked to appoint a By-Laws committee. Dick Kauffunger, Luella Mast, open for others to contact.

[8:19 pm: Richard Zierdt begins taking minutes.]

Education Committee. Mark Adelman. Explains MCCF opposition to the bill which authorized the use of Montgomery Hills Junior High by a private school, possibly with a very long lease.

Environment committee. Cary suggests, on behalf of Charles Pritchard, that a Public Safety (and Health) Committee, ad-hoc or otherwise, be established. By-law committee is encouraged to examine this possibility.

Land Use Committee. Wayne Goldstein testified on large-lot development and MPDUs. MPDUs (affordable housing) are driving (encouraging) sewers into large-lot zones.

Historic Preservation. Wayne Goldstein. Wayne notes the accomplishments of school architect Howard Wright Cutler.

Transportation Committee. Stan Schiff. The special meeting on Transportation Policy issues had very few participants. Why? Answer: General disgust, discouragement, and frustration with transportation issues & efforts. Politicians say progress will be made regarding transportation, but nothing happens. Stan: a cap on development is being considered. Jobs drive development in Montgomery. Dan Wilhelm: Annual Growth Policy. Planning Board has been holding work sessions. The APG may be revised. A new policy would steer where growth goes, and by how much. It might implement county-wide development impact taxes.

Public Finance Committee. Charles Lapinski. Our water bill subsidizes development.

Edgewood Terrace Special Exception. Ms. Green wants to take decision to the Court of Appeals.

Rosemary Village Discussion. Cary Lamari. Refers to article in the Post. 406 apartments in Silver Spring. Apparently, there might have been undue pressure applied to some residents to sell. Cary would like the Housing Committee to review this.

Clean Streets. Bob Jones. Snow removal, leaf collection, and street cleaning. The costs of leaf collection and street cleaning should be made part of the County's operating budget, since these costs are fixed.

Mr. Baltimore [MCCF recent Community Hero] passed away.

Meeting adjourns 9:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

PROPOSED BY-LAWS CHANGES

By Richard Kauffunger and Dan Wilhelm

At the Federation's regular meeting on September 8, 2003, the membership voted to refer the changes to Article III of the By-Laws back to the By-Laws Committee. The Committee reviewed Article III comprehensively and recommends the following changes. The changes have been reviewed by the Executive Committee, which recommends approval by Delegates. Language to be deleted is in brackets and new language to be added is underlined, similar to the amendment style used by the Council when proposing changes to the County Charter.

ARTICLE III. ANNUAL DUES

1. *DUES*. Dues of member associations and associates shall be payable in advance by July 1 and based on the number of delegates as follows:

[\$45 for the first two delegates and \$20 for each additional delegate] size of the organization. Dues amounts and structure shall be determined by the Executive Board and presented to the delegates for approval.

2. *PARTIAL YEARS*. Dues of new members joining after [February 1] January 1 will be reduced by forty percent.

3. *DELINQUENT DUES*. The names of member associations that have not paid their dues will be published in the [November] October issue of the Federation newsletter. Membership of such member associations will be terminated if dues are not received by [January 15] January 1 following. [An association dropped for non-payment of dues may rejoin the Federation only upon payment of one year's back dues.]

JUSTIFICATION

1. Move associate dues from Article XVIII and combine it with delegate dues.

2. The present dues amount and structure are not in accordance with the by-laws. Rather than amending the by-laws each time a change is needed, revisions will be put before the delegates by the Executive Board for a vote.

3. For associations who were previous members that didn't renew their membership last year, remove the penalty of being required to pay for two years. This practice discourages associations from rejoining and creates hard feelings. The problem often arises when the leadership of an association changes and the new leaders are not aware of MCCF and do not pay their dues.

4. Change the grace period for being able to vote without payment of dues from seven months to six months. Also

change target dates in order to reduce the number of different periods.

5. While not part of the by-laws, it is recommended that we start posting a sign-in sheet at the back table for membership meetings. The list will indicate whether an association has paid their dues. This practice will let delegates know they need to get their association to pay its dues.

NEIGHBORS OF NORTHWEST BRANCH

By Charles Pritchard, Environmental Chair

A non-profit environmental outdoor recreational organization with this name is being formed in a partnership between communities, interested individuals and the local governments that border the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River, including Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties, Takoma Park and the District of Columbia. The organization will be modeled on and augment similar groups such as the Friends of Sligo Creek, the Eyes of the Paint Branch and the Anacostia Restoration Society.

The Northwest Branch is a major tributary to the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The stream is also bordered by the Northwest Trail which provides a link with the trail systems in those watersheds. The Northwest Trail will also be a link under the Montgomery County Legacy Open Space (LOS) program to a future "Green Ribbon Trail" connecting it to the Patuxent State Park and the Potomac River--a continuous natural surface trail 90 to 100 miles in length.

The Green Ribbon Trail and the LOS program is supported by the Civic Federation of Montgomery County and will provide a major outdoor recreational resource for hikers, anglers, environmental students and nature enthusiasts. "Neighbors of the Northwest Branch" will depend largely on volunteers to carry out such projects as monitoring water quality and wildlife resources, and eliminating invasive alien plants.

The inauguration and first public event of the new organization will take place on October 25 at the Adelphi Mill, 8402 Riggs Rd., Adelphi, Maryland. The workshop is being sponsored by the Washington D.C. Council of Governments (COG) and the Summit Fund of Washington, D.C. The workshop will feature

presentations on the history and importance of the Northwest Branch, a free lunch, and a guided stream walk in the afternoon. Persons interested in attending the workshop should RSVP by October 15 to Christine Vatovec at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 777 North Capitol St. NE, Suite 300, Washington DC 20003-4239. RSVP can also be made by contacting Christine at 202-962-3233, or FAX 202-962-3203 or E-mail: cvatovec@mwcog.org. Please provide name, address, telephone number and FAX or E-mail address with an indication as to whether or not a vegetarian lunch is requested.

The Neighbors of Northwest Branch promises to become a major element in citizen environmental and recreational advocacy and proactive partnership with local governments, including Montgomery County.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

DELEGATES!

Please check with your civic association president or treasurer to make sure your membership form and dues for the current year have been sent to Membership Chair Rosie Poole, 5812 Cherrymeadows Court, Derwood, MD 20855; phone 240-632-9394; email: rpoole@mri.jhu.edu.

The membership renewal form may be downloaded from the Civic Federation's website:

<http://www.montgomerycivic.org/>

washingtonpost.com

GROUP AIMS TO KEEP GOVERNMENT ON ITS TOES

Washington Post Staff Writers

Thursday, July 10, 2003; Page GZ02

Montgomery County's grass-roots organizations aren't shy about expressing their views, making recommendations, analyzing legislation and helping lawmakers shape policies -- even when no one asks for their advice.

The June newsletter of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, for example, suggested that government needs constructive prodding from time to time and asked some straightforward questions, such as:

"Have You Noticed? Taxes are going through the roof. Public schools are failing. Government is overspending. Streets are full of potholes. Good jobs are in Virginia. Are you and your community better off today than eight years ago?"

Next Thursday, members of the civic federation, which represents more than 100 civic and community groups, will meet for their annual brainstorming session to discuss a range of Montgomery social and education issues. Then they'll take their suggestions to county lawmakers.

"This summer's meeting is especially important, considering the recently made and still-pending decisions before the County Council relating to housing, mental health, public schools, environment, the budget and the lack of transportation options," said Cary Lamari, president of the federation.

Lamari said he'll ask residents an important question: **"Has government been responsive to your communities?"**

Recommendations from next week's meeting, Lamari said, will be studied by the civic federation's three committees -- housing, campaign finance reform and transportation -- and eventually will be passed along to the Montgomery County Council.

One council member said he doesn't mind the constant community oversight.

Steven A. Silverman (D-At Large) said the civic federation has had a "long-standing, positive impact on policy discussions, and we welcome their input. We want to know what the civic community thinks."

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CONFUSED ABOUT THE MEDICARE DEBATE?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! BE INFORMED.

DATE: Join us on October 20, 2003 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon

VENUE: John's Hopkins University Auditorium, Rockville Campus, 9601 Medical Center Drive, Rockville, MD 20850, 301-294-7000

SPEAKERS

- Gail Shearer, Health Policy Analyst, The Consumers' Union: *"The House and Senate Proposals on Medicare – What's Best for Medicare Consumers"*
- Nicolette K. Shugart, The DELMARVA Foundation (the Medicare Quality Assurance agency for Montgomery County): *"Your Rights Under Medicare" and "Finding and Using Web based Quality of Care Information on Medicare"*

FORUM SPONSORS: Senior Vital Living Montgomery, Senior Leadership Montgomery, The Evergreen Society, Aging and Disability Services, DHHS

Your guide to senior employment, volunteer and life long learning opportunities can be found at www.montgomerycountymd.gov. Click on Residents, click on Aging Services and scroll down to *Senior Vital Living Montgomery*.

2003-2004 MCCF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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PLEASE COME AND JOIN US AT OUR
NEXT DELEGATES MEETING

A DIALOGUE ABOUT THE AGP WITH MONTGOMERY COUNTY

COUNCILMEMBERS PHIL ANDREWS,
TOM PEREZ, AND MARILYN PRAISNER

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2003, 7:45 P.M.

FIRST FLOOR AUDITORIUM

County Council Office Building, Rockville, MD

NEXT MEETING OF THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE

The next meeting of the By-Laws Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 7:30 pm at the Government Services Center, Reedie Drive in Wheaton. Call Dick Kauffunger at 301-871-1369 for additional information.

Think about it...

You have just read one of the most thorough, independent, and accurate newsletters in the County. For over 78 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, public utilities, 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 devoting your own time and energy, it is the best investment you can make for your community.

Download an application form today from our website:

www.montgomerycivic.org/membersh.pdf

DELEGATES MEETING **MONDAY, OCTOBER 13**

7:45 P.M.

**FIRST FLOOR AUDITORIUM
COUNTY COUNCIL OFFICE BUILDING
100 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE**

AGENDA:

- 7:45 – Call to order, Cary Lamari presiding
- 7:46 – Announcements and Introductions
- 7:50 – Adoption of Agenda & Approval of minutes
- 8:05 – Community Hero Award – Evelyn Burton
- 8:15 – Program: A dialogue about the Annual Growth Policy
- 8:50 – Questions and Answers
- 9:10 – Old Business - Officers Reports
- 9: 20 – Resolution on Support of Public Financing of Elections
- 9:25 – New Business
- 9:45 – Adjournment

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation** is a nonprofit, educational, and advocacy countywide organization. It was founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Its monthly Delegates meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Monday of each month (except for holidays, July, August and December) at 7:45 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 for the next issue: Midnight Saturday, October 25. Prepare submission in fully justified 11-point Times Roman font, preferably as a MS Word or text-only document, attach it to e-mail, and send it to Hotyakker@comcast.net.

Please send all address corrections to Dan Wilhelm, 904 Cannon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-384-2698, djwilhelm@erols.com.

NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, October 23, 2003, 7:45 p.m.

RED BRICK COURTHOUSE

29 Courthouse Square, Rockville

(Note: there is free parking in front of the courthouse.)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION

DAN WILHELM, DATABASE MANAGER

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