



Civic Federation News

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Serving the Public Interest Since 1925*

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MARCH 2005

March Program The Proposed FY 2006 County Operating Budget: Costly to the Taxpayer!

By Chuck Lapinski, Public Finance and Utilities
Chairman

Our March program will focus on issues in the Executive's proposed FY 2006 Operating Budget for the county. This will be submitted to the County Council on Tuesday, March 15th, the day after our March meeting. Even though we will not have the proposed budget to work with, there are a large number of problems and issues that we need to understand in preparation for developing and submitting our testimony for the first week of April. The County Council begins hearings on the proposed operating budget the week prior to our April meeting.

Invited panelists include members of the County Council: President Tom Perez, and Marilyn Praisner, Chair of the Council's Management and Fiscal Policy Committee. It also includes representatives from the Executive Branch: Joe Beach from the Executive's

Staff; a manager from the County Office of Management and Budget (OMB); and Derek Berlage, Chairman of the Park and Planning Commission. They will address the following areas:

- Council's exercise of its oversight and accountability responsibilities
- Trends and growth in revenue sources
 - Personal income taxes: receipts heading higher
 - Property taxes and assessments: huge reassessments
 - Construction impact taxes and fees
 - Other miscellaneous taxes and fees: receipts trending up
- Operating budget cost drivers
 - Employee total compensation: need for a review
 - Benefits: health costs continue to rise in both the public and private sectors
 - Productivity improvements
 - Process and equipment capitalization
- Reserve Fund (rainy day) accounts: time to rebuild
- Affordability process, prudence and discipline
 - Priorities and constraints
 - Short term perspective: avoiding long term implications
 - Budget optimism and realism: waiting for a prudence miracle!

Early indications suggest that every source of revenue will continue to increase at least for the next year or two, which is a significant turnaround from the past several years. The biggest increases will come from property and income taxes. This follows several years of increasing rates and fees. In some areas, notably education, expenditures should actually slow down. This year, enrollment was lower than projected. For

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more than ten years, the school enrollment increased more than 3,000 students per year. This year the increase was less than a third of what was projected. So, you would expect some cost avoidance (savings!) from the lower enrollment rate. So far this has not happened. The school system, for instance, wants to spend over \$3 million on personal digital assistants (Palm Pilots, Blackberrys) for the teachers. The school system has not even run a pilot program to determine their productivity usefulness; nor has it sought the Council's permission to reprogram these funds. Moreover, MCPS is prepared to award a contract for the PDAs without competitive bidding. Thus there are some major accountability issues that must be addressed. With respect to the park system, like several other departments and agencies, it was a bill payer for the schools and the public safety services. Heavy maintenance and services expansion consistent with our growth were curtailed. It may be time to catch up on maintenance of the parks infrastructure, and reconsider how the parks' needs are met in the budget process

Given that there is a flush revenue situation, the decisions we make about our capital and operating budgets must be guided by prudence, and the principle of fairness and equitableness to the taxpayers, to the schools and to county employees.

Our objective is to gain some insight into what this proposed budget will mean to you, the county citizen and taxpayer, and how we should guide its prudent use.

What Direction Will Future Job and Housing Growth Take?

By Dan Wilhelm, President

I attended a visioning exercise on Feb 2 to discuss and explore how the greater Washington area should accommodate growth between now and 2030. This exercise, called "Reality Check", looked at where the expected 1.6 million new jobs and 2 million new residents should be placed. A group of 300 leaders from 92 organizations was divided into 30 tables of 10

people each. At each table were seated developers, government leaders, environmentalists and citizens from Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. Each table held a large map with grid lines that created one mile square areas where we could place jobs and housing. The map covered an area bounded by the following counties: Frederick Howard, Anne Arundel, Calvert, St Mary's, and Charles in Maryland; and Stafford, Spotsylvania, Fauquier and Loudoun in Virginia.

It was interesting to walk among the tables and see where each group placed the jobs and housing. While there were clearly differences between tables, the common pattern was to place much of the growth in DC, around rail stations, and along highways - I-270 to Frederick, I-95 between the Baltimore and Washington Beltways, along MD Route 50 to Annapolis, along I-95 south toward Quantico, I-66 and the Dulles Toll Road.

Of interest to Montgomery County residents, the Baltimore-Washington corridor received a lot of employment to help balance jobs with the existing large stock of housing. Today, most jobs are along I-270 and few are on the eastern side of the county. The different tables focused the growth in this corridor largely between US Route 29 and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. The desire of many participants was to balance jobs and housing locally throughout the region.

Although we were told to ignore the need for more roads, transit, schools and other infrastructure, people tried to place new development at existing or planned rail stations and highways to maximize use of the existing transportation system. We all realized that the inability of the government (at all levels) to provide infrastructure will have a significant negative impact upon our ability to accommodate the growth we were told to anticipate. At my table, there was discussion about the need to protect the environment, and provide open space in order to create livable communities. The desire was that much of the new development would be mixed-use with retail and housing in the same development. The effort to balance jobs and housing was directed toward minimizing the need and distance for people to drive.

For those new to the thinking of planners, mixed-use development is the current trend. In a number of our retail areas, this development pattern would include retail such as stores and restaurants on the ground floor and residential units on the floors above. It is also possible that small offices might be on the second level with residential units beginning at the third floor. Mixed-use could also take the form of multiple buildings, some with retail and offices, others for residential use.

We observed that in this exercise development patterns did not match well with the current reality where housing is being built in the outer parts of the region while most jobs are in DC and adjacent counties. There was no discussion about what steps are needed to move current development patterns closer to what a majority of the 300 people desired.

There has been discussion for years about the need to coordinate development throughout the region. There have been multiple ideas proposed for achieving this coordination but little has actually happened. The "Reality Check" exercise was pitched as the first of a number of such meetings. Will something surface where the planning for development and infrastructure throughout the region is actually coordinated and brought under control? We will all need to see what follows next.

Pending Election Reform Legislation in Annapolis

By Dale Tibbitts, District 5 Vice President and Chair, Committee on Election Reforms

The state legislative session is in full swing in Annapolis. The MCCF has or will testify on 3 electoral reform bills. We ask that you call or write your state delegates and senators to lobby in opposition to or support of these bills. Our elected officials need to hear from us.

Senate Bill (SB) 561 and House Bill (HB) 648 is a state constitutional amendment that would allow the

counties to raise the signature requirement for charter amendments. In Montgomery County's case, if approved, this could raise the number of valid signatures from 10,000 (the current minimum) to between 26,000 and 104,000 based on current voter registration.

This bill was sponsored primarily by Montgomery County legislators—Senators Ruben, Forehand, Kramer and Teitelbaum, and Delegates Barkley, Barve, Bronrott, Dumais, Feldman, Franchot, Gutierrez, Heller, Hixson, Kaiser, King, Lee, Madaleno, Mandel, Montgomery, Simmons and Stern—in response to Robin Ficker's perennial ballot initiatives. The following is testimony MCCF offered in Annapolis.

"The Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF*) **opposes SB 561 and HB 648.** This is an inappropriate statewide "solution" for a perceived Montgomery County problem. Voters in Baltimore City and charter counties around the state should not have their ability to petition a charter amendment to the ballot curtailed because Montgomery County citizens have successfully exercised the right."

"The current powers in Montgomery County wish to silence all opposition by raising the charter amendment petition signature threshold so high that no citizen group could ever effectively meet it. They are attempting to stop one individual who has been particularly effective in getting questions onto the ballot with statewide legislation."

"Advocates of this legislation say that getting 10,000 valid signatures is too easy. From recent experience, the MCCF can attest that there is nothing easy about getting that many signatures. It's really 12,000 signatures collected one at a time. 20,000 or more intrusive "Excuse me, are you a registered voter in Montgomery County?" screening questions. 15,000 explanations of the proposed charter change and then a request from a stranger that they legibly print their name, full address, date of birth, current date and finally their signature. In this day of voter apathy, if a responsible civic organization can organize the effort to

do all of that, they deserve to have a question on the ballot. The effect of raising the requirement will be to have no public sponsored charter amendment."

Second, Senate bill (SB) 461 and House bill (HB) 566 once again attempt to close the multiple corporation, multiple contribution loophole. MCCF's testimony:

"The Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF*) **supports SB 461 and HB 566.** Corporations, wholly-owned subsidiaries, partnerships and 80% common ownership LLCs, LLPs, and REITs should be considered as one entity for purposes of campaign contribution limitations."

"Everyone is entitled to support the candidate of their choice and to give voice to that support by contributing to a campaign. But we put limits on the amount of money one can contribute so that no one's voice is drowned out. Because state law allows business entities to contribute to campaigns, they are subject to the same limitations that individuals are. For a variety of reason, many new business endeavors are spun off as separate entities but remain under the control of the parent organization. The consequence of this new business model is an explosion of business entities. Each 'child' in the business family has a new contribution limit. In effect, there is no contribution limit on businesses."

"Because of the diligent research by Neighbors for a Better Montgomery, www.NeighborsPAC.org, you can see clearly see the problem. In the attached chart titled "F.O.Day Interests Contributions for 2002 Election Cycle", note the coordinated effort of the multiple related business entities each giving \$700 to the same Montgomery County Council candidates, \$4000 to Douglas Duncan and \$4000 to Bob Ehrlich. The practice has continued in the 2006 cycle. The attached Washington Post editorial also details the problem. The only defense of "bundling" offered by the candidates is that they are "... playing by the rules as they exist;" You can change the rules. Modify the law to change it back to its original intent."

Third, MCCF **supports SB 725 and HB 1031** - Public Funding Act for Candidates for the General Assembly. We continue to support campaign finance reforms, but our membership, far and away, overwhelmingly believes that voluntary public financing of election campaigns is the best solution. MCCF testimony:

"Why do we need it? A survey sponsored by the Stenberg Commission found that 94% of the respondents thought that campaign contributions influence the policies supported by state elected officials. The study also found that 75% believe that fundraising is a major source of political corruption. Unfortunately, all state legislators are unfairly tainted by the perception that their votes are bought and paid for by influential special interest contributors. Public financing of campaigns removes the source of the potentially real, and certainly perceived, problem of influence peddling."

"Participating candidates are not beholden to any large contributor. The candidates can spend the entire time meeting voters and campaigning on issues instead of fundraising. Citizens get few fundraising solicitations and more discussion of issues. There is a more opportunity for candidates from every ethnic, racial, social, financial and professional background to get involved. The MCCF applauds all who chose to run for public office. We believe the opportunity to serve the public should be open to all citizens, not just to those who can raise huge sums of money."

"The worst part of campaigning is raising money. Promoting, hopefully not politically prostituting, oneself for money is at best unpleasant. If a candidate's base constituency is lower income, then it may be impossible to financially compete. If a person can demonstrate broad based support by collecting a large number of modest \$5-\$20 qualifying contributions, then she/he should be able to run."

"Incumbents still have an advantage because of name recognition and opportunity for media exposure, but not an advantage in financial contributions. Incumbents, who participated, can run on their record but cannot be

accused of being influenced by large campaign contributors."

"One or two dollars a year is not too much to restore faith and confidence in our government. The system is entirely voluntary so it does not violate the first amendment free speech provision of the constitution. If a candidate does not participate, he/she is subject to current election law."

Status Report on Issue of Seven Locks Elementary School: On Perception and Trust

by Mark R. Adelman, Education Committee Chair

Any attempt to summarize an issue as complex as the fate of the Seven Locks Elementary School is almost certain to fail, at least in part because so many people have so many strong feelings and differing perspectives. What follows is my personal attempt at a snapshot.

The Board of Education has voted that, instead of remodeling/expanding the existing Seven Locks Elementary School (ES), it will build a new school on the nearby Kendale Road site. The new school will be quite large (more than 700 student capacity) and reflects the need to modernize the existing Seven Locks ES, as well as deal with overcrowding at Potomac ES. Many citizens of the Seven Locks area are waging a vigorous effort to reverse this decision (<http://www.save7locksschool.org/>), but plans to build the new school are already well underway (<http://www.potomacalmanac.com/article.asp?article=46418&paper=70&cat=104>). Until late 2003, it was assumed that the existing Seven Locks ES would be upgraded and extensive plans had been developed toward that end. But the County Council and County Executive were working on a plan to begin to deal with the lack of 'affordable housing' in Montgomery County and had asked various county agencies to identify properties that might be 'unneeded' and thus could be turned over to the county to enable construction of

affordable housing. I outlined this program, and my concerns about it, in the May 2004 issue of the MCCF Newsletter

(<http://www.montgomerycivic.org/newsletter.asp>) and also wrote articles for the Sentinel Newspaper's Civic Fed Corner on this matter (also available on our website). The Kendale Road site was on the County Executive's initial list, and there is reason to believe that the decision to build a new ES on it is the first step to deciding that the Seven Locks site is 'unneeded' and should be turned over to the County - possibly for high density affordable housing that is not part of the Master Plan and would eliminate a local community center and heavily used playing fields.

Unfortunately, whatever happens in this case, the outcome will leave a bitter taste in the mouths of many and will be questioned. Numerous public officials have been neither consistent nor transparent in their actions (or words), nor have they been convincing in their arguments. Many people have played on - or raised questions about the sincerity of - the 'motives' of others. Citizens have questioned the motives of public officials who have failed to advance affordable housing, but now urge the use of potential school sites for housing at a time when so many of our children attend classes in portables and under circumstances where no plan can guarantee that even the mandated percentage of newly constructed housing units will in fact be of the affordable variety. While most of the outspoken citizens appear genuinely concerned about educational programs, some are clearly objecting to high-density, 'affordable' housing in their neighborhoods. And while most school supporters recognize the need to argue for consistent policies that balance the needs of all, the temptation to accept a solution that addresses short term needs can be overwhelming. It is exceedingly difficult to decide if the Superintendent and the Board of Education have made their decision based on "hard numbers", "best practices" and realistic scenarios, as opposed to political pressures to provide land for developers or concerns about ways to guarantee an uninterrupted flow of tax dollars to support the ever-growing needs of our school system. The MCCF Education Committee is continuing to research this

issue, in the context of the policies and practices of the Board of Education, the Montgomery County Public Schools, the County Council, and the County Executive: we will have more to say about these matters, but the 'rush to decision' in this instance has been much too fast to allow adequate, thoughtful, public debate.

It has been my contention that politics and public education policy should not be - but all too often are - allowed to mix. The path we have all trodden, the one that leads us to the current apparent destination of a new school on the Kendale Road site, also has the consequence of allowing perceptions of insincerity to grow to the point where few trust the validity of the conclusions reached. Whether or not a new school is constructed on the Kendale site, whether or not the Seven Locks site is surplussed, whether or not public dollars are wisely spent, whether or not the children of our community are well served: all these "facts" will be forever clouded by doubts in the minds of many. And that is NOT the way we should run our County, nor educate our kids.

Recommendations on New Zoning Text Amendment

by Jim Humphrey, District 1 Vice President

In the resolution approved at the February 14 meeting, delegates agreed to recommend to the Council that the following four changes be made to the proposed ZTA 05-02 creating a new Transit-Oriented Mixed Use Zone, the "TOMX" zone:

- Specify a maximum building height in feet for the Optional Method.
- Establish a minimum required setback from any adjacent single-family residential zone for Optional Method development (or specify that it is not allowed).
- While supporting the 20% public use space requirement for Optional Method, we think 10% for Standard Method is too low (unless there is also minimum required "active and passive recreational space" for projects with a residential component)

and strongly oppose a reduction to 5% in projects with MPDUs. We think there is no less need for light, space and air around buildings with MPDUs in them than for other residential buildings.

- MCCF recommends establishing a maximum dwelling-unit-per-acre density for Standard and Optional Method. If you are creating a new zone to allow mixed use at medium density levels, then a density cap should be placed not just on FAR but on the number of dwelling units per acre.
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Proposed Bylaws Amendments

by Peggy Dennis, Bylaws Committee Chair

The following amendments were proposed, discussed and amended in the February regular meeting of the Civic Federation. They will be voted on at the March meeting. [new/added text in bold. Deleted-text.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATION

1. *Board of Directors.* There shall be a Board of Directors comprised of the President, First Vice President, ~~four~~ Second Vice Presidents, the Recording Secretary, the Corresponding Secretary, and the Treasurer. It shall have the duties and powers set forth in these bylaws and as may be imposed by state law. The Board of Directors shall meet at least annually. An Affirmative Vote shall be at least five votes, and shall be required for a Board action.

3. *Elected Officers.* Elected officers shall be a President, First Vice President, ~~four~~ Second Vice Presidents, one District Vice President from each of the ~~Councilmanic~~ **eight State Legislative** Districts, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

2. *First Vice President.* ~~It shall be the duty of~~ **The First Vice President shall be responsible for all programs presented at regular meetings and will**

assist the President upon request in the discharge of all presidential duties. All duties of the President shall devolve upon the First Vice President if the President is absent or unable to act.

3. *Second Vice Presidents.* The Second Vice Presidents shall **serve as Chair of the Membership Committee.** ~~and perform such occasional or regular services needed by the Federation but are not the responsibility of another Federation officer. Such assignments may include chairing special committees or task associations, coordinating Standing Committees when they are concerned with the same issue, or representing the Federation on initiatives involving other community associations. Such assignments will be made by the Executive Committee or by the President with the advice of the Committee.~~

7. *District Vice Presidents.* The **eight** District Vice Presidents shall represent the Federation within their respective ~~Councilmanic~~ **State legislative** Districts. **District Vice Presidents need not reside in their district if no other candidate from that district is nominated.** They shall endeavor to become familiar with all major residential areas, citizens groups, and areas of citizen concern within their Districts. They shall endeavor to ensure that the concerns of their districts are represented in Federation deliberations and positions, that Member associations are advised of issues and potential positions affecting them, and that government officials are responsive to their Member associations. They shall **serve on the Membership Committee,** ~~provide support~~ participate in Membership Drives, publicize the Federation and its activities and events, and encourage attendance at meetings and events.

ARTICLE XVI. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

4. *Special Disbursements.* In emergencies the Executive Committee may authorize an expenditure up to ~~one hundred dollars~~ **5% of the current fiscal year's budget.** It may also authorize reasonable costs for the September Newsletter. Such expenditures shall be reported at the next Regular Meeting, and the budget adjusted accordingly.

6. *Annual Financial Audits.* The financial records of the Federation shall be audited annually **and whenever a new Treasurer takes over that position.** ~~by an Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall consist of three individuals, one of whom shall be a Second Vice President.~~ **The Auditor shall be** nominated by the President and confirmed by the Executive Committee. The Treasurer for the year **or period** being audited shall provide all records to the ~~Audit Committee~~ **Auditor** and provide such assistance as may be required. ~~The Audit Committee Auditor~~ shall submit a written report to the Executive Committee ~~which, upon approval of the report, shall authorize transfer of records and accounts to the new Treasurer.~~

The following amendments to the bylaws will be introduced and discussed at the Regular Meeting on March 14 and voted on at the Regular Meeting on April 11, 2005. **[new/added text in bold. Deleted text.** *(Explanation and justifications in italics)*

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

3. Individual Member

(2) Duties and Privileges. An Associate will receive the Newsletter, may attend Federation functions and participate in discussions at meetings, **and** serve on ~~appointed~~ committees. ~~and~~ He may ~~not~~ make motions ~~or~~ **and vote in committee but not in Executive Committee or regular meetings.** If appointed to chair a committee, he **should attend Executive Committee meetings but** shall not ~~thereby~~ be a voting member of the Executive Committee. ~~and~~ In no case shall the number of committee chairs held by Associates exceed 25% of all committees.

(We are concerned that some committees have a number of "members" who are not members of the MCCF. While all committee meetings are open to the public, individuals who wish to serve on a committee, make motions and vote should be, at the least, associate members of the MCCF. And ALL committee chairs should attend the ExComm meetings both for purposes of reporting to the ExComm, taking feedback back to his committee and keeping apprised of other MCCF concerns. Individuals who cannot attend ExComm

meetings should not chair committees.)

ARTICLE IV. OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATION

1. *Board of Directors.* There shall be a Board of Directors comprised of the President, First Vice President, ~~four~~ **Second Vice Presidents, eight District Vice Presidents**, the Recording Secretary, ~~the Corresponding Secretary~~, and the Treasurer.

3. *Elected Officers.* Elected officers shall be a President, First Vice President, ~~four~~ **Second Vice Presidents, one eight** District Vice Presidents from each of the ~~Councilmanic state legislative~~ **state legislative** districts, a Recording Secretary, ~~a Corresponding Secretary~~, and a Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

~~5. *Corresponding Secretary.* The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Federation; send out notices of meetings as appropriate; act as Recording Secretary in the absence of that officer; and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee. (With the proliferation and efficiency of email, most of these duties are no longer carried out. It therefore makes sense to eliminate the position. We propose to renumber the elective positions accordingly:)~~

1. President
2. First Vice President
3. Second Vice President
4. District Vice Presidents (8)
5. Recording Secretary
6. Treasurer

ARTICLE VIII. DUTIES OF APPOINTED OFFICIALS

4. *Public Relations Officer.* The Public Relations Officer shall **oversee the maintenance of the Federations's website. He shall create**, receive, edit, and transmit news releases to the ~~general public media~~ **general public media** when so directed by the Federation, and maintain active, up-to-date files and a rapport with the press. **He shall act as**

Recording Secretary in the absence of that officer. ~~members of the Federation, elected officials and others, in all matters dealing with Federation business. He shall promote, to the greatest extent possible, the goals and achievements of the Federation which shall be discussed with the Executive Committee from time-to-time as needs may dictate.~~

(The PRO gets the new responsibility for the website. The one remaining, real responsibility still needing to be covered by the "corresponding secretary" - backstopping the Recording Secretary - gets shifted, formally, to the PRO. And the lined-out sentences at the end should apply to all of us, not just the PRO.)

ARTICLE IX. DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. *General.* **Committee members must be members of the Federation.** It shall be the general duty of each Standing Committee to monitor, evaluate, and report on the status and activity of matters within its assigned purview. In situations in which an issue impacts more than one Standing Committee, the Executive Committee shall assign and coordinate Committee tasks. Committee reports and recommendations shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval and any further action. Committees shall represent and carry out established positions of the Federation which impact their area of responsibility, such actions to include participation in work sessions, hearings, and panels. *(See previous justification)*

February 14, 2005 Regular Meeting Minutes

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF President Dan Wilhelm called the meeting to order at 7:50 pm. Introductions all around.

Announcements. Cary Lamari: Charter Review Commission is holding a public hearing Thursday.

Guests: Charlie Loehr and Peter Boettinger from M-NC/PPC, Park and Planning staff.

Agenda. Jim Humphrey adds ZTA 05-02. Agenda is approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report. Luella Mast distributes her report. Treasurer's report is approved.

Minutes. Minutes from the January 10, 2005 meeting are accepted as printed in the February Newsletter.

Program. "Talking Trash" - the County's Carry-In, Carry-Out program in County-owned parks. Peggy Dennis acted as host. Mr. Loehr: Program started in autumn 2002 with six pilot parks around the County. Lasted 6 months. County then approved all-County program. Trash cans removed in late 2003, early 2004. 270 parks, 1100 cans. Spring 2004: Council directed that cans be re-introduced along stream-valley parks for environmental reasons. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the parks have been very successful with the program. The other $\frac{1}{4}$ have been less successful; still getting a number of complaints, but fewer as time goes on. Total amount of waste reduced 25%; tipping fees down 25%; gasoline usage down 30%. [from what amount?]

Peggy Dennis spoke about the program in national parks, mainly C.&O. Canal National Historical Park. Federal program began in 1999, but not to reduce costs. Rationale was to protect the environment. Trash receptacles attract trash. On the average weekend with 500 containers, Park Service hauled 1500 bags of trash out of C&O Canal N.H.P.. Since 1999, there have been 13 complaints. Volunteers like Peggy & Bob Dennis note that litter on trails & river shore is about the same. Floods and fishermen generate the most trash. Volunteer organizations may help local parks.

Q/A. Arnie Gordon: Where's the Adopt-a-Park program? Why does county park system pay tipping fees? A: Does not know why.

Wayne Goldstein: Spoke with City of Rockville Parks. Have 5 parks that are trash-free. Some parks are picked up daily. Charles Pritchard: Never had trash cans in Upper Northwest. Richard Zierdt: Federal park supplies bags for trash. Mr. Loehr: such bags seemed to generate more trash in County parks. RZ: My civic association is not equipped to have community picnics and remove

the trash ourselves. Jerry Garson: What about dead trees? Can we get rid of those? Arnie Gordon: Another problem is park land adjacent to highways. Muncaster Mill & Emory Road are not getting clean. Q: Some park staff don't seem to be going their jobs. 500 Sligo Avenue, for example. Peggy: How about a trash hotline to report violations? Q: How involved are Park Police regarding trash problems? A: This should be known. Q: Where are the cans now? A: Most are in storage. Some were recycled.

Member Issues:

Arnie Gordon, Greater Colesville C.A. Bowie Mill Road school site was given back to the County without notice to citizens. County wants affordable housing. Boys' and Girls' Club has developed a plan to acquire the site for athletic facilities, a portion of which would be workforce housing. Call is now in the Council's and Executive's court.

Wildwood Manor C.A. Large scale projects; Rockspring Drive, across from Walter Johnson H.S. Issue of pedestrian safety. A: Talk with Board of Education about busing. Build large crosswalks.

Northwood Four Corners C.A. County-wide bikeways master plan. Concern about bike traffic through the neighborhood (narrow streets, circuitous route).

Nominating Committee: Dick Kauffunger, chair; Chuck Lapinski, George Sauer, Cary Lamari, James Snee, Lee Shipman, Peggy Dennis. Luella asks for a quorum. 16 groups are represented. Jim Humphrey moves acceptance of the list. Seconded. Passes with one nay, and one abstention.

Annual Awards Committee: Charles Wolff, chair; Cary Lamari, James Snee. Arnie Gordon volunteers from the floor. Accepted.

Bylaws Amendments: Peggy Dennis, Bylaws Committee proposes a structure close to that which the MCCF advocates in the County Council with one First and one 2nd Vice President and eight District Vice Presidents from eight state legislative districts. Proposed changes are printed on pages 3 and 4 of the February,

2005 Newsletter. Dean Ahmad moves that District Vice Presidents need not reside in their district if no other candidate from that district is nominated. Seconded. Passes unanimously. Charles moves that these amendments be presented for approval at the next delegates meeting. Seconded. Passes unanimously. Bylaws committee meets again next Monday.

House Bill MC 502-05 Highway Soliciting (affects Montgomery County only). Dave Michaels. Designed to stop solicitation of money in highway median strips. House Bill 4-36. Dave moves that the MCCF support the bill. Seconded. Dean Ahmad: How many persons have been hurt in the median strip? Dave: Unknown. Dan Wilhelm: has personally almost hit a solicitor. Some feel solicitation in the median strip is a form of free speech. Some feel many of these solicitations are a rip-off. Motion passes, 14-5-3.

ZTA 05-02. New Zone proposed by Park and Planning and County Council for metro areas that are not CBDs, such as Grosvenor, White Flint, Twinbrook, etc. Transit-oriented, mixed use. Delegates unanimously adopted resolution to suggest changes to County Council.

[Secretary left at 10 PM; meeting had not yet adjourned.]

February 24, 2005 Executive Committee Minutes

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF president Dan Wilhelm calls the meeting to order at 7:59 pm. Six in attendance, including Zierdt, Schofield, Tibbitts, Dennis, Adelman.

Minutes from Jan 20, 2004 ExComm meeting approved.

Treasurer's Reports are distributed. Accepted.

Programs. Chuck Lapinski is working on March program on the budget. April is for campaign financing. Program for Roberts Rules of Order for June may be postponed until September. A program on the

neighborhood's experience with Holy Cross Hospital's outreach might be presented in June. Derick Berlage might be included, discussing how developers might meet with the community as part of project planning.

May Annual Awards Banquet. Peggy Dennis met with the restaurant owner for price and menu details. MCCF will be charged \$15 per person, price to include wine and sodas, tax and gratuities. Proposed cost for tickets set at \$20 per person / \$35 per couple.

President's Report. Dan attended the "Reality Check" program February 2, 2005 sponsored by the Urban Land Institute of Washington, Smart Growth Alliance, and Fannie Mae. Discussed how development might occur in the next 30 years. See www.uli.org. Dan met with Andrea Arnold of Solutions Not Sprawl. MCCF has been invited to co-sponsor a Celebrate Rural Montgomery program. Mark offers this factoid: 1999 was the first year that Montgomery County had more horses than cows.

Bylaws - Peggy Dennis distributes proposed changes involving associate member privileges, elimination of the position of corresponding secretary, adding webmaster to duties of public relations office, membership of committees. These proposed changes will be presented at the March regular meeting to be discussed then voted up or down at the April meeting. These will be the last changes from the Bylaws Committee for this season.

Membership. Dan is calling every delegate at least once.

Housing. (no report)

Education. Mark Adelman. Distributes petition to rescind the decision to build a new school on the Kendale Road site; instead renovate and expand the existing Seven Locks Elementary school. The actual breakdown of the BoE vote on its decision is not known.

Legislation. Dale Tibbitts. Testified in Annapolis twice on multiple corporation, multiple contribution loophole. State constitutional amendment to allow charter counties to change (increase) the number of signatures required to get a question on the ballot, so long as it is between 5

and 20 percent of the population. March 15, 2005
Maryland Senate normally around 1 PM, 1:30 PM, or 5
PM. See Maryland State Legislative website.

Dan: Testified in Annapolis about GARVEE bonds
vis-à-vis the ICC, and about public solicitations in
highway rights-of-way. Several MCCF members
testified before the Charter Review Commission. On
March 3, 2005 that body will have one of its regular
meetings

Meeting adjourned 9:50 PM

*You are Cordially Invited to the
Montgomery County Civic Federation's*

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Friday, May 6, 2005

6:00 to 9:30 p.m.

New Fortune Restaurant

16515 S. Frederick Avenue, Gaithersburg

\$20 per person

\$35 per couple

Questions? Call Peggy Dennis, (301) 983 9738

*Please cut off and fill in this stub. Mail with a check payable to: Montgomery
County Civic Federation to: Luella Mast, Treasurer, 809 Hobbs Dr., Colesville, MD
20904*

I/We will attend the banquet on Friday, May 6, 2005

(Names)

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 14, 2005
7:45 3rd Floor Auditorium
County Council Office Building.
100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD

Agenda

7:45 Call to Order
7:47 Introduction and Announcements
7:55 Adoption of Business Meeting Agenda
7:58 Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report
8:00 Program
9:00 Committee Reports
9:15 Member Issues
9:20 Vote on Bylaws Amendments discussed last month
 New Bylaws Amendments proposed
9:40 Old Business
9:45 New Business
10:00 Adjourn

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation** is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization. It was founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Its regular monthly meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Monday of each month except for July and August at 7:45 p.m. in the First Floor Auditorium, Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD.

The **Civic Federation News** is published monthly. It is mailed to Delegates; associate members; news media, and local, state, and federal officials. It can also be seen on our website: www.montgomerycivic.org. Permission is granted to reprint any article provided proper credit is given to the "**Civic Federation News of the Montgomery County Civic Federation.**"

Submit contributions for the next issue by: **Midnight, Sunday March 27.** Prepare submission as an MS Word, Word Perfect 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,

NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 24, 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

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