



Civic Federation News

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

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SESSION 785

WWW.MONTGOMERYCIVIC.ORG

MARCH 2007

Where, Oh Where are Our Tax Dollars Going?

The March Program on the County's FY 2008 Operating Budget

By Chuck Lapinski, Co-Chair, Public Finance and Utilities Chairman

Yes, it's that time again when the County Executive releases his budget for the fiscal year starting July, 2007. This budget will be submitted to the Council on March 15th, three days after we meet. Enough has already been shared with selected staff, insiders such as Council members, and some news sources to enable us to hold a first rate program on this topic at our meeting on Monday, March 12.

We have the following confirmed panelists: Joe Beach, Acting Director of the county's Office of Management & Budget and member of the County Executive's Chief Administrative Officer Staff; Council Members Duchy Trachtenberg, Chair of the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee; Phil Andrews, Chair of the Public Safety Committee; and Marc Elrich, member of the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee. We also expect to have Tim Firestine, the county's Chief Administrative Officer, join us in time for the Q & A session, and a brief visit from our new County Executive, Ike Leggett. So, if you're interested and/or concerned about your county taxes, how they're being spent and how much they may go up in the future, read the following article (p 4) and come to the program with questions and constructive suggestions for our elected officials.

Immediately following the program, we will be making a special presentation to the county and specifically to Ike Leggett. This presentation will be made by our own Peggy Dennis, and could save the county approximately \$250,000 - a line item in the current budget. No I am not going to tell what it is; you've got to join us to find out!

MCCF Environment Committee Report

By Caren Madsen, Environment Committee Chairman

Environmental issues are front and center for both Montgomery County and the state this winter as the new Leggett and O'Malley administrations have completed their transition policy statements. I participated in the Leggett transition team preparation of the following policy recommendation from the "Taking Charge...Making Change" transition document which is on the County Executive's Web site:

People come to Montgomery County because of its renowned quality of life. Our residents value our urban centers, our agricultural communities, and our suburban neighborhoods. A clean environment along with diverse opportunities for recreation and the arts are essential elements of our quality of life. As our community changes and grows to one million people, the Leggett Administration is committed to revitalizing older communities, attracting and retaining quality businesses, providing adequate public facilities, and developing healthy and sustainable new communities based on the principles of smart growth.

Preserving and Sustaining the Environment for Our Community.

We are the stewards of our land and natural resources. Pollution undermines our health, economy, and budget.

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We must design and enforce policies that recognize the critical importance of our environmental assets to a healthy and sustainable community by creating incentives and disincentives that protect the land, air and water.

- ✓ *Develop a County tree ordinance focused on individual trees.*
- ✓ *Plan urban/suburban areas that encourage walking, biking and transit use, including pedestrian/biking routes to schools.*
- ✓ *Design government buildings and schools for energy/ water conservation, nontoxic materials, natural light and infiltration of stormwater.*
- ✓ *Develop an aggressive watershed protection strategy infiltrating stormwater on-site rather than holding it in ponds or discharging it directly into streams.*
- ✓ *Enforce best management practices on County farms.*
- ✓ *Design Countywide targeted environmental education.*
- ✓ *Expedite green infrastructure plan to identify and protect green corridors.*
- ✓ *Evaluate all decisions in light of the urgent need to address global climate change.*

As the Leggett transition team met, another cadre of stakeholders from around the state drafted the O'Malley environmental policy statement. Many of the O'Malley recommendations focus on a more coordinated regional effort dealing with Chesapeake Bay cleanup, climate change and a host of other environmental goals. With a legislature and County Council poised to strengthen the county's approach to natural resource and energy conservation, there seems to be political will to improve intergovernmental cooperation on these issues. And as this newsletter went to press, the remaining position for County Executive Leggett to fill is for the director of the county's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The M-NCPPC Forest Conservation Task Force completed its work and submitted recommendations to the Planning Board on Feb. 22. MCCF was represented on this 9-member task force, which worked for eight months to develop recommendations to improve M-NCPPC's implementation of the existing Forest Conservation Law (FCL). The task force report was well-received by the Planning Board. (For a copy of the task force report, please send an e-mail to CarenMadsen@msn.com.)

After the task force had concluded its work, the Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association (BIA) transmitted a letter to Planning Board Chairman Royce Hanson criticizing the report, noting that the recommendations "...will do very little to improve administration of the [FCL]." and that, "...there are still problems with how the law is applied in the plan review process." Four members of BIA served on the task force along with representatives of civic and environmental organizations and Claire Iseli from Council President Marilyn Praisner's office.

Council Members Marc Elrich (At-Large) and Roger Berliner (Dist. 1) are spearheading group discussions of a county tree preservation ordinance that will complement the existing FCL and provide better protection for mature trees that may not fall under the county definition of "forest." Councilmember Berliner is also organizing a workshop on climate change and will explore the relationship between loss of tree cover and global warming.

The Stormwater Partners Coalition, of which MCCF is a member, is making progress in some key areas, while staying true to its core mission: a stormwater permit with measurable goals that provides accountability, consistency, longevity, and fairness in stormwater management and watershed protection. At its last meeting on Feb. 16, the Montgomery County Clean Water Task Force agreed to recommend that Environmentally Sound Design and Low Impact Development (ESD/LID) be made mandatory for all projects, public and private. This decision -- subject to further review by agency heads and definition of terms -- stipulates that all Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects (including county roads, schools, libraries, park facilities, and other facilities) in the design stage as of FY09 will be designed according to ESD/LID principles. The Task Force includes top officials and advisers of six agencies plus the Council.

In late February, the coalition was scheduled to meet with Dr. Robert Summers and other Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) officials in Baltimore. DEP representatives Meo Curtis, Stan Edwards, and Acting Director Fariba Kassiri were invited as well. The Partners have spent the past year submitting proposals. The coalition now looks to MDE for the agency to share their plans for the permit. The coalition will prepare a response based on the outcome of the Feb. 26th meeting.

The Stormwater Partners ad-hoc green streets committee, including MCCF President Wayne Goldstein, met in late February to review a draft proposal for a green streets amendment to the county Road Code bill. Diane Cameron is working with the bicycling and Smart Growth communities, in collaboration with the Planning Board and others, to press for an inclusive process that will bring in the expertise and the stakeholders necessary to yield "Complete and Green Streets" that are walkable, bikeable, wheelchair-accessible, leafy, and stream-friendly.

The Stormwater Partners has requested a meeting with County Executive Leggett to seek his support for a stronger & more effective NPDES stormwater permit, and collaborate with the coalition in near-term actions for stream protection and restoration.

Those interested in donating to the fund for the Sierra Club/Environmental Defense lawsuit against the ICC should write their tax-deductible checks to the Sierra Foundation-Maryland Chapter and write "ICC lawsuit" in the bottom left corner of the check. Donations can be mailed to: Betsy Johnson, 4413 Ridge St., Chevy Chase, MD 20815. The status of the lawsuit is that the Council of Governments requested an extension of time to respond to the suit. The proposed ICC is the most expensive, sprawl-producing, pollution-generating project in the history of Maryland.

Agricultural Policy Group Files Report by Jim Humphrey, Planning and Land Use Committee Chairman

On January 30, the Ad Hoc Agricultural Policy Working Group presented its final report to the County Council. The group was appointed by the Council in April 2006 to "provide comprehensive advice on ways to ensure the long-term protection of the Agricultural Reserve and preservation of our agricultural industry." Their recommendations focus on three primary issue areas--regulation of "child lots", use of sand mound septic systems, and the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Program.

Child Lots. When the AgReserve was created in 1981, residential density of properties in the northern one-third of the county was downzoned from one dwelling per 5 acres to one per 25 acres. An exception allows "child

lots" to be created in excess of allowed density, to provide home sites for grown children wishing to live and work on the family farm. The Working Group is recommending that language be added to the County Code to set maximum density allowed when "child lots" are used, and to prevent sale or rental of these homes for at least 5 years after they are created.

Sand mound septic systems permit greater density of development than was originally envisaged in the AgReserve, since these systems can be used on land that does not perc well enough for traditional trench septic systems. The master plan for the AgReserve recommends their use only when traditional septic systems fail, or to allow building on a "child lot" that does not perc with a traditional trench waste system. The Working Group recommends continued approval for use of sand mound septic, but limiting the density related to its use.

TDR system. On each 25 acres of land in the Rural Density Transfer area, the zoning now allows development of 1 dwelling where 5 had been allowed before 1981. In order for property owners to recover equity that would otherwise have been lost in the downzoning, the owner can sell or transfer to a developer the rights (TDRs) to build the other 4 homes in a "TDR receiving area". The Working Group recommends creation of a Building Lot Termination Program that would allow an owner of 25 acres to sell or transfer the rights to build all 5 homes in a receiving area. This would lock in that land for agricultural use or as rural open space only, and prevent any future development.

In addition to addressing the specific issues listed above, the Working Group also made general recommendations such as avoiding fragmentation of farmland, clarifying limitations on non-agricultural non-residential uses such as private institutional facilities, identifying new receiving areas for TDRs and expanding their use to floating, commercial and industrial zones, educating the public on the value of the AgReserve, and promoting the economic health of the agriculture industry in the County. The report can be accessed on-line at the following URL:

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/doc/aggroup_finalreport.pdf

Upcoming Programs for April, May and June

by Arnold Gordon, 1st Vice President

Your Federation is planning some very informative programs for this spring.

In **April** we will be presenting a program on the funding and maintenance of our parks and recreation programs. Part of this will relate to the questions concerning the sharing of the tax burden for our parks which has been in the news recently.

May's program will focus on the Annual Growth Policy being developed by the MNC/PPC at the behest of the County Council. This will be a good opportunity for us to become acquainted with the new policy as it is being presented to the Council for their consideration.

In **June** we will be presenting a program on the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) and its operations, organization and responsibilities. If you ever drink water, bathe or flush your toilets, you may have questions about where your water comes from, how it's treated on its way to your home, how your rates are determined, and what happens to all that waste water when it leaves your home.

Please stay tuned for further details as these programs are developed.

Nominations and Awardees Needed

The Civic Federation is ours to manage and run. It takes many people working together to get things done. The job of the Nominating Committee is hard when not enough people volunteer or are nominated for elective positions. If you are willing to serve or if you can think of another delegate whom you feel would do a good job, please let the Nominating Committee know ASAP.

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Sandy Vogelgesang 301-365-2347 everest.associates@erols.com
Chuck Lapinski 301-384-0392 clapinsk@meri.com
Charles Wolff 301-585-9744 wolff99@starpower.net
Cary Lamari 301-924-2746 carylamari@yahoo.com

We also need your suggestions for recipients of the awards which will be presented at the MCCF Awards Banquet on Friday, May 11. The awards are:

- The Sentinel Award, presented to an individual or group for a significant contribution to good government at the local level.
- The Gazette Award, presented to an individual or group who performs exemplary volunteer service for the residents of the county.
- The Star Cup, awarded to a MCCF delegate or committee for outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County.

If you have ideas for individuals or groups to be honored with an award, please contact one of the members of the Awards Committee. Your ideas only count if you make them known!

Peggy Dennis 301-983-9738 hotyakker@comcast.net
Luella Mast 301-384-4178 luellam@comcast.net
Arnie Gordon 301-570-0481 nmcaprexy@aol.com

The County's Proposed FY 2008 Operating Budget--Costly to the Taxpayer

By Chuck Lapinski, Co-Chair, Public Finance and Utilities Chairman

We already know enough about the proposed FY 2008 Operating Budget to see a disturbing picture forming. Many of our concerns have been identified and discussed in previous issues of this newsletter. Others are new. And some are old but taken to a whole new level. The result will be the creation of structural deficits that can only be overcome by either (1) drastic reductions in other areas, (not likely since they represent new contractual commitments) or (2) overriding the County Charter's limits on property tax increases.

On a practical basis, the County, through the past actions of our previous elected officials, has pushed the county's income tax to its statutory limit of 58% of the owed State tax. Our county income taxes cannot go any higher. And they're not likely to be lowered either. Remember, the Council promised us 16 years ago that

they would return our income taxes to the 50% level of 1990, but they never made good on that promise! Out of a 20% increase in income tax rate (an increase to 60%) we only got back 2% resulting in the current 58%.

Our elected officials have also raised just about every tax and fee to its practical limits. Further increases in phone and utility taxes and fees, for example, may result in decreased revenues as folks cut back in use in response to ever higher costs. But even if some of these discretionary taxes and fees are somewhat increased, they cannot be made large enough to compensate for the high cost of the contracts which have been negotiated with labor unions representing all the county's and school 's employees. For over 20 years, we have stated that the agreements with all of our employees must be fair and equitable to them AND fair and equitable to the taxpayer.

One topic will have overall priority, and that is the recently negotiated labor contracts with our police, teachers and school system employees. It is my opinion and that of many others that these agreements are economically unaffordable over both the near and long term. Even the Washington Post and the Examiner question the advisability of these agreements. For example, all the agreements include not only the increase in wage and salary adjustments, but also step increases of 3.5% that apply to some 90% of county and school system employees. (Some employees are at the top of their steps, so they don't receive the step increase, but qualify for the wage and salary adjustment.) The teachers and other school system employees are projected to receive wage and salary adjustments of 4.8% the 1st year, 5.0% the 2nd year and 5.3% in the 3rd year plus the 3.5% annual step increases! Thus the total increases by contract year are: 8.3%, 8.5%, and 8.8%. This compounds to a total of a 27.9% increase over the 3 years. For the school budget (and by extension to the County budget) this agreement adds over \$70 million in direct labor costs to the operating budget. Over the last six years, the increase averaged about 7% per year and had a similar impact on the costs. Similarly, the county government employees and police agreements will be almost 25% increase over the same 3-year period. The dollar impact of these hasn't been published as yet. It should be noted that since the inception of the Consumer Price Index for the Baltimore Washington region, it has averaged approximately 2.7%. Over the same period, private sector employers have averaged less than 3.5% Total for salary and wage adjustment and step increases,

equal to about an 11% increase over the same 3 year period historically. And, all of these increases add significantly to the retirement benefit liabilities of the County.

Other equally important issues include:

- progress in Council oversight and accountability
- prudent budget and financial processes and affordability guidelines
- property assessments and Charter limits
- progress on delayed government infrastructure maintenance and improvements backlog
- budget optimism and realism
- project cost estimating standards
- comprehensive review and assessment of employee total compensation
- productivity improvement
- financial management system software and hardware upgrades
- and county-wide equipment re-capitalization

OHHHH! The Annapolis legislature is considering some 20 bills that will allow the state and the counties to implement new taxes and/or increase existing taxes and fees. But the worst of the lot, HB 399, would legislate the rollback of the super-majority vote required to over-ride the charter limits on increases to property and state taxes. Nearly 17 years ago, the taxpayers and voters of this county approved the requirement that a "super majority" of Council members had to vote to override the 10% charter limit. Now is the time to be proactive and let your state representatives know that you don't want the will of the people overridden.

Bylaws Committee Report

By Luella Mast, Bylaws Committee Chairman

At our March meeting we will vote on two motions: one covering changes to the Bylaws and a second one making additions to the Standing Rules.

BYLAWS

Proposed amendments to three Articles were printed in the February Newsletter, proposed and discussed at the February meeting, and are printed below. A final vote on the proposed changes, those printed in February and not changed and those amended and printed below, will be taken at our March regular meeting. Copies of the

February newsletter are available on our website. A limited number of copies of the February newsletter will also be available at the March meeting.

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

3. Second Vice President. The Second Vice president shall be responsible for membership recruitment and retention. He shall conduct membership drives, evaluate the eligibility of applicants for membership, and transmit to the Treasurer all dues collected with identity of member and year.

ARTICLE IX. DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

6. Public Finance and Utilities Committee. This committee shall monitor, evaluate, report, and make recommendations concerning the County's taxing, fees, spending, and borrowing policies and programs and concerning adequacy, charges, policies, and operations of the various utilities and the related public agencies.

ARTICLE XII. MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Regular Meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly at a time and place set by the Committee and announced in a timely manner.

STANDING RULES

Changes to the Standing Rules are printed in the newsletter and voted on at the regular meeting that month. The Bylaws Committee and the Executive Committee recommend these additions (see below) to the Standing Rules to be voted on at the March regular meeting.

The reason for the recommended additions is: (1) to clarify what the Standing Rules are and how they are created and changed; and, (2) since our bylaws do not specify the amount of dues or the discounts we have, we want to put that information in the Standing Rules so it is available to all. We currently have only one Standing Rule which covers restrictions to the display of campaign literature at MCCF meetings.

Add the following introduction:

Standing Rules concern the administration of the

organization. They are adopted by the Executive Committee unless the bylaws specify otherwise.

Add the following Standing Rule:

2. Dues are:

Local Association:		
30 - 300 households		\$45.00
301 - 600 households		\$65.00
600+ households		\$85.00
Umbrella Association:		
60 - 500 households		\$45.00
501 - 1000 households		\$65.00
1001+ households		\$85.00

Regional or County-Wide Organization:

50+ memberships		\$45.00
Individual Associate		\$20.00
Associate Group		\$85.00

Dues may be reduced by \$5.00 for each delegate who receives the newsletter electronically. Dues for organizations not MCCF members in the prior year and joining after January 1 will be reduced by forty (40) percent. Dues paid in May or June will be credited to the next fiscal year.

Minutes of the February 12, 2007 Regular Meeting

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF Secretary arrives at 8:07 pm with the meeting in progress. 23 persons sign the attendance sheets by meeting's end, but this secretary senses attendance was higher.

Treasurer's Report: Luella Mast provides copies of her report. Cash assets are \$8662.24. The MCCF Awards Ceremony will be held Friday, May 11.

8:07 Program: Arnie Gordon. Public Safety and Police. Two quests: Marc Zifcak, President of Lodge 35, Fraternal Order of Police, and Walter Bader, Immediate Past-President. The group was formed in October 1969 through the efforts of 35 Montgomery County police officers (web site: www.fop35.com).

Walter Bader speaks. In 1978, police salaries and pay for hazardous duty were reduced. Police went to the public

via a petition to amend the County Charter. In 1980, county voters granted police collective bargaining rights. Since the law passed in 1982, no police job action has taken place. In 1990, an arbitrator gave the police a 0% increase (during a period of fiscal difficulties).

Montgomery County (MC) competes with all other area jurisdictions and park police in the recruitment of officers. MC is 7th (out of 7 area jurisdictions) in starting pay at \$42,014. After 25 years, the salary is \$77,600 annually, and is 5th out of the 7. Federal agencies also hire officers away from MC. MC police may retire after 25 years, but they cannot retire from MC hire back on to work for MC. MC has 1193 officers in six districts and 440 non-sworn personnel (they do not have police powers, such as arrest). Huge equipment shortages, especially technical equipment, decrease efficiency. FOP would prefer officers do less administrative work and have more presence on the street. The FOP does not push for more officers, but rather better use of officers' time. Some trivial calls divert officer's time. Conditions under which police officers work are hazardous. Officers are facing more dangers and complexities such as diseases, terrorism, AIDS, and TB. County management has limited number of laptop transmitters. New technologies are purchased without first being vetted by police officers. FOP urges procurement of technology after end users have tried and approved it for efficacy. MC has the highest paid police chief of the seven area jurisdictions. Radios now communicate with radios of other jurisdictions. 70% of officers live in MC. 30% live in another county or state for economic reasons (majority of those are in Frederick). FOP believes that officers should be able to live in the jurisdiction where they serve, and that this engenders an attachment to the community. Workforce housing is too little. The solution is being able to afford to live in the community. One of the biggest causes of police stress is the lack of resources. FOP resists recent ticket quotas and mandatory paper issuance for every stop. Police prefer verbal warnings and goodwill where appropriate. School support by the police in the form of crossing guards, policing schools, etc, shows up in the police budget, not the school budget. Q&A follows.

Q. Equipment? A: None should be purchased without police vetting.

Q: Amount allocated to schools? A: "Unfunded mandate".

Q: Education? A: Police officers are required to earn 60 college credits minimum. Some have masters degrees and beyond.

Q: What are the top three issues should police be dealing with? A: Personal safety, and the ability of police to get to the call. More people are killed in automobile accidents

than by murder in MC.

Q: Parking in yellow, no parking areas, handicapped spaces? A: These areas may in private areas, such as shopping centers. Also, they require proper signage.

Q: Would FOP support a parking "police"? A: There are already are some, such as in Bethesda.

Q: 1193 officers in six districts.

Q: How many officers at midnight to eight? A: A minimum of 36 officers, 36-60 officers.

Catch up on the equipment first before you add more officers.

Q: Does the FOP have position papers about what you need to be effective? A: Yes.

A: Some police are disciplined, transferred, demoted for doing their jobs.

9:13 pm. Program end.

Jacques Gelin, Friends of the Rockville Library, presents the following resolution which is offered by Charles Wolff:

"Whereas the new Rockville Regional Library is located in the new town center of Rockville, which by virtue of being the county seat has a special relationship to those residents of Montgomery County who have paid the supreme sacrifice in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Montgomery County Civic Federation hereby Resolves that it supports the naming of the new Rockville Regional Library as the Rockville Memorial Library in honor of the young service men and woman (sic) from Montgomery County who have lost their lives in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq."

The resolution is seconded. Discussion: the Davis Library and Noyes Library are named after individuals who contributed either the land or the books. Some delegates supported the motion as fitting; some felt it politicizes the renaming of public buildings. Also, the process by which buildings may be renamed was not clear at the meeting. Apparently, the County Executive has the authority to rename buildings. There may be motivation to rename it "Memorial" rather than naming it for the previous county executive. Motion passes 12-2-0.

Committee Reports.

Transportation: Byron Bloch. County Council has recommended the prioritization of 14 intersection improvements. The Council has recommended building the Purple Line, which requires about \$1B over six years. Chuck Lapinski: insufficient State funding on this means "We're [Montgomery County] getting screwed." Jim

Humphrey wonders if the Purple Line station should be moved to the Medical Center, given the BRAC re-alignment.

Housing: Jim Humphrey. Checking whether state law would prohibit County's long-term rental of publicly-owned property for affordable housing projects. Committee will also contact the Commissioner of Housing for City of Baltimore regarding this issue. The Committee also wrote to the County Council about concern over the appointment of Richard Nelson, Jr. as Director of Department of Housing and Community Affairs; specifically, possible conflict of interest due to his having served as a member of Housing Opportunities Commission Board. Committee sat in on Council's interview with Mr. Nelson.

Planning and Land Use: Jim Humphrey. The Committee has registered as a "party of interest" in a rezoning case before the Hearing Examiner that concerns Alternative Review Committee process to insure financial feasibility of projects including MPDUs, what qualifies as "green area" in a Planned Development project, and other precedent setting issues. Martin Klauber, Montgomery County's People's Counsel, is charging that the Alternative Review Committee (ARC) process does not adhere to the state and county Open Meetings Act. Also, the Committee sat in on Council's interview of Carla Reid Joyner to be next Director of Department of Permitting Services.

Public Finance. Chuck Lapinski. MCCF Delegates program on March 12 - Budget Issues. Three Councilmembers and other financial staff are expected to attend.

New Business. Dan Wilhelm. Moves that MCCF support the \$400M for school construction for next fiscal year. Of the \$170M unallocated, MCCF urges the Governor, senators, and delegates to allocate a significant amount to Montgomery County. Five Seconds. Passes 14-0-0.

Dan then moves that MCCF support funding of the GCEI as proposed in HB 139 and SB 109. MCCF also urges that senators and delegates work to start the funding of FY08 rather than wait for FY09 to start the funding. Five Seconds. 13-0-0.

Dan then moves that MCCF support legislation that would require that all new vehicles sold in Maryland beginning in 2011 must meet the California pollution standards, current at this time. Five seconds. 8-3-1.

Meeting adjourned 10:02.

Minutes of the January 17 Executive Committee Meeting

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

Executive Committee met at the Julius West Middle School, 651 Great Falls Road, Rockville.

MCCF President Wayne Goldstein called meeting to order at 7:54 pm. Present are Goldstein, Wilhelm, Dennis, Mast, Zierdt, Vogelgesang, Schrader, Humphrey, Weinman, Sauer, Lapinski, and individual member Brian McTigue.

Minutes. ExComm Minutes of January 17 are approved.

Treasurer: Luella Mast distributed her reports and announced that we have an increase of four members over this time last year. Balance is \$8804.24 as of February 21, 2007.

Environment. Wayne Goldstein. "Green Streets" group has been meeting. Forest Conversation Task Force will be making its report and recommendations to the Planning Board on February 22. A "Road Group" is advocating pervious surfaces for bike routes, sidewalks, and alleys, but not main roads.

Education. Wayne wrote a column for the Sentinel about the MCPS's blueprint Baldrige Report. MCPS scored the lowest in community involvement. Wayne advocates a "School Stat" department to monitor educational metrics.

Housing. Jim Humphrey. The committee will contact the head of the City of Baltimore Housing Authority to explore how local government can use ground rent arrangements, also known as leasehold contracts, to rent publicly owned land to developers to cut costs for creating affordable and workforce housing.

Planning and Land Use. Jim Humphrey. The Office of Legislative Oversight Report on Residential Infill Construction was released Feb. 13, focused on DPS enforcement of County laws and regulations. Jim and Wayne commented on draft Development Approval Manual, available on Planning Board website, at a

meeting of working group. The Board will hold a public hearing on the revised draft in March. Report of Ad Hoc Agriculture Policy Working Group presented to Council Jan. 30. Planning Board held their hearing Feb. 22 and will comment to Council. Developers must now contact neighborhood groups before applying for a development plan. Jim, representing the Civic Federation, has registered as a party of record in the Development Plan Amendment now before the County's Hearing Examiner. An approval could set several precedents regarding the failure of development to adhere to master plan height and density limits, and the Alternative Review Committee process in granting density bonuses in exchange for MPDUs. Jim suspects that developers are waiting for redevelopment plans to be submitted so they can recommend to the submitter that higher densities might be achieved.

Bylaws Committee. Luella Mast. The Committee met February 11, 2007. The Committee recommends that member dues be spelled out in the Standing Rules. Arnie Gordon moves that (1) standing rules are adopted by the ExComm unless the bylaws stipulate otherwise, and (2) add that dues are as written in those standing rules. Seconded. Passes 9-0-1. The Committee also recommends that Article XI, Section 2 be deleted and portions moved to the Standing Rules. The Committee also recommends that Article XV, Section 5 be written (by removing 8 words) as: "Recipients of the Star Cup shall not have possession of the original trophy for which the award is named, but shall be given a suitably engraved memento." Dan moves that the ExComm approve these changes. Seconded. Passes 10-0-0.

Luella would like reports from time to time from those who represent the MCCF before other organizations. Also, the order of agenda items at delegate meetings might be changed by moving at least some committee reports before the Program (usually involving invited speakers) begins. Many people leave after the program and miss the committee reports. Dan moves that the program begin at 8:30 pm consistent with the speaker's schedule. Seconded. Motion to close discussion passes 8-2-0. Motion then passes 7-3-0.

Transportation. Peggy Dennis. Byron Bloch (committee chair, not present) would like a motion published in the Newsletter to be voted at the next delegates meeting: The MCCF supports reflective striping applied to street surfaces to better delineate traffic lanes. Cost considerations were raised. Peggy moves that this be published in the newsletter and be brought before the

membership. Seconded. Passes 6-1-3. Peggy has been working on a Orphan Roads report that she would like to get to councilmember Nancy Floreen and DPWT - before they conduct their own, expensive - \$250,000 - report. The information will be very useful.

Programs. March - Budget: Phil Andrews, Duchy Trachtenburg will attend, and others. April - Ideas offered: County funded red-light cameras; Parks, playing fields, and park police; Agricultural Reserve; Purple Line and Corridor City Transitway. There is a new director for Parks and a new one for Recreation. WSSC - current state of affairs of the infrastructure; Program on Special Education. Consensus leaned towards Parks and Recreation for April. Moved and seconded. Passes 11-0-0. Other program ideas: Growth policy; Cable costs. Dan moves that the May program be on the Annual Growth Policy. Seconded. Passes 11-0-0. WSSC program is moved for June. Seconded. 7-3-1.

Public Finance and Utilities. Marvin Weinman. County labor contracts: 4.8% COLA increase for 2008, 5% for 2009, and 5.3% for 2010. Chuck Lapinski. The County's operating budget will be out March 15. Public hearings will be held on April 9, 10, 11, and 12. Several money bills have been introduced in the State. Prince Georges County will not intrude on its TRIM (which was a 2% cap, and is now a 4% cap) policy. Montgomery County will be even more of a bill payer than it is now. Chuck believes our income taxes will increase 1% to 1.5%.

Legislation and Committee for Montgomery. Dan Wilhelm. Several CFM members testified in Annapolis.

New Business.

MCCF Secretary Richard Zierdt brings up three items. (1) He considers "Whereas" clauses not part of a motion and will not include them in the minutes for the Newsletter. He claims they amount to reasons to support the motion but are not the substance of it. (2) Richard raised concern about the way the motion to support the renaming of the Rockville Library was handled at the last delegates meeting. Wayne believes it is too late to reconsider it. (3) A bill to place the question of Early Voting before Maryland voters at the November 2008 election (Constitutional Amendment) has passed the Maryland House of Delegates (HB201) and reportedly the Senate (SB1). The ExComm feels it is too late to debate these bills.

10:05 Meeting adjourned.

MCCF Officers & Committees

Position	Name	Home Phone	Office Phone	Email
Elected				
President	Wayne Goldstein	301-942-8079	Same	waynemgoldstein@hotmail.com
1st Vice-President	Arnold Gordon	301-570-0481	Same	nmcaprexy@aol.com
2nd Vice-President	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	same	hotyakker@comcast.net
District 14 VP	Alyce Ortuzar	301-774-6617	same	farmparity@starpower.net
District 15 VP	Sandy Vogelgesang	301-365-2347	same	everest.associates@erols.com
District 16 VP	Lee Shipman	301-229-2005	Same	plannerlee@earthlink.net
District 17 VP	<i>Vacant</i>			
District 18 VP	<i>Vacant</i>			
District 19 VP	Bill Schrader	301-946-6545	same	schraderw@erols.com
District 20 VP	Elizabeth Conklin	301-587-6210	same	elizabethconklin@earthlink.net
District 39 VP	<i>Vacant</i>			
Treasurer	Luella Mast	301-384-4178	same	luellam@comcast.net
Recording Secretary	Richard Zierdt	301-881-0283	703-464-1617	richard.zierdt@asg.com
Appointed				
Historian	Charles Wolff	301-585-9744	301-286-8185	wolff99@starpower.net
Public Relations Officer	Lyle Schofield		301-951-5340	lyle@norbeck.org
Newsletter Editor	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	same	hotyakker@comcast.net
Parliamentarian	<i>Vacant</i>			
Past President	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698		djwilhelm@verizon.net
Standing Committees				
Education	Mark Adelman	301-942-6893	301-295-3208	mra@educationalassistance.org
Environment	Caren Madsen	240-793-4603		carenmadsen@msn.com
Legislation	<i>Vacant</i>			
Planning & Land Use	Jim Humphrey	301-652-6359	same	theelms518@earthlink.net
Public Finance & Utilities	Chuck Lapinski	301-384-0392	202-548-5578	clapinsk@mcri.com
Public Finance & Utilities	Marvin Weinman	301-946-3799	same	weinmanm@msn.com
Public Safety	<i>Vacant</i>			
Transportation	Byron Bloch	301-299-1801	301-299-1800	byron@autosafetyexpert.com
Special Committees (Not Part of the Executive Committee)				
Bylaws	Peggy Dennis	301-983-9738	Same	hotyakker@comcast.net
Database	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698	703-883-6847	djwilhelm@verizon.net
Housing	Sarah Gilligan	301-564-4373	Same	gilligan.j@worldnet.att.net
Sentinel Article Coordination	Wayne Goldstein	301-942-8079		waynemgoldstein@hotmail.com
Historical Preservation	Wayne Goldstein	301-942-8079		waynemgoldstein@hotmail.com
Committee for Montgomery	Dan Wilhelm	301-384-2698		djwilhelm@verizon.net

*Mark Your Calendar Now for the
Montgomery County Civic Federation's*

*2007 ANNUAL AWARDS
BANQUET*

*Friday, May 11
6:00 to 9:30 p.m.*

*New Fortune Restaurant in
Gaithersburg*

Federation Meeting

Monday, March 12
7:45 1st Floor Auditorium
County Council Office Building.
100 Maryland Ave.
Rockville, MD

Agenda:

7:45 Call to Order
7:46 Introduction and Announcements
7:48 Adoption of Meeting Agenda
7:50 Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report
8:00 Committee Reports with resolutions
8:15 Program: County's FY08 Operating Budget
9:30 Committee Reports, cont'd.
9:45 Presentation to Executive Leggett
9:55 Member Issues
10:00 Old Business
10:10 New Business
10:15 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 monthly Federation meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Monday of each month September through June 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.**"

Submit contributions for the next issue by: **Saturday March 24, Midnight.** 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, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-384-2698, or djwilhelm@verizon.net.

NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, March 21, 7:45 p.m.

Julius West Middle School
651 Great Falls Road, Rockville

MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION

DAN WILHELM, DATABASE MANAGER
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