



# Civic Federation News

December 2009

Serving the Public Interest since 1925

Official Publication of  
the Montgomery  
County Civic Federation  
Session 812  
www.montgomerycivic.org

Peggy Dennis, Editor - Phone: 301-983-9738 - Email: hotyakker@comcast.net

## December Program: Montgomery County's Library System By Peggy Dennis, President

Our program on Monday evening, December 14 will be on our Montgomery County Public Library (MCPL) system. Our principle guest speaker will be Ms. Parker Hamilton, Director of Libraries. "You'll love Parker; she's a superb leader, and MCPL is lucky to have her," says our second presenter, our own Ann Dorrough, MCCF delegate from the Huntington Terrace Citizens' Association. Ann has been a Trustee of "Friends of the Librar" for three years and is currently serving as its President.

The County Executive's "Library Summit" was held on November 17 and, in the most recent budget trimming exercise, MCPL took the biggest percentage-wise cut. We will want to learn first hand how these cuts may affect our 22 libraries, particularly whether hours and services will have to be cut back, personnel fired or furloughed, and acquisitions curtailed. Other questions we would like Ms. Hamilton to address: what are the criteria for purchasing books and media items? What are the standards for culling and disposing of older materials? Do patrons cover the true replacement cost of material they fail to return? If not, how is the level of a fine determined? Why does the Rockville Library not have more government publications than it used to have? What is the MCPL's policy on on-line publications? How are donations handled? Do we still have a contract for on-line foreign language learning programs like the Rosetta Stone? What is the MCPL's vision of an "Express Library" such as that recommended for the White Flint area, and does the current standard mandating an "express library" rather than a full service library ignore the needs of our growing "urban cores"? What is the justification for building a new library in Wheaton when the current library is very serviceable and funds are in short supply?

Friends of the Library is the umbrella organization for the 16 chapters affiliated with specific branches. Ann will be discussing what the umbrella organization does, what the branch-specific chapters do, and how this important

### Contents

December Program: Montgomery County's Library System.....	1
President's Message: Proposal for Rockwood Rocks Woodrock .....	1
County Cuts Street Tree Planting Program.....	2
Oh Deer! (Part 1) .....	3
Montgomery County's Water Resources Functional Plan .....	4
State Legislation and Budget .....	4
Message of Thanks from Huntington Terrace C.A. ....	4
Important Committees Need Volunteers: .....	5
Sentinel Column .....	5
Minutes of the November 9 Meeting.....	5
Minutes of the November 18 Executive Committee Meeting.....	7

Mark Your Calendar Now  
for the  
Montgomery County Civic Federation's  
**2010 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET**  
**Friday, May 14, 2010**  
**6:00 to 9:30 p.m.**  
Conference Center  
at the  
Universities at Shady Grove

volunteer organization relates to the overall system.

I will welcome short questions for purposes of clarifying a point just made during the presentations. There will also be plenty of opportunity for additional questions from the audience and dialogue between audience and presenters. So please come armed with your own questions, and plan to learn many things you didn't already know about one of our county's most valuable assets.

## President's Message: Proposal for Rockwood Rocks Woodrock By Peggy Dennis, President

Let me start by explaining about Rockwood Manor Park. The Rockwood estate was originally owned by Mrs. Carolyn Caughey. She willed it to the Girl Scouts in 1936 and it was run by them as the Girl Scout National Center from 1939 to 1979. "Since 1983" the Parks Department's website tells us, "M-NCPPC has operated the park as a conference and education center. A highlight of the park is Rockwood Manor, a lovely and unique retreat that is perfect for weddings, meetings, and small conferences. The park also features a variety of overnight accommodations, including dormitories for youth groups." It has been run as a commercial, for-profit operation. It is supposed to be financially self-sustaining and presumably plow any profits back into the Parks Department to help fund other park needs. But during the last two years Rockwood Manor has lost money.

Like M-NCPPC's Planning Department, it seems the Parks Department has not learned how to best deal with the public they are supposed to serve. For the past year Mr. Terry Brooks, Division Chief of the Special Program Division of the Montgomery County Department of Parks has been working with Sunny Pitcher, founder and owner of Potomac Paddlesports in Rockville. Mr. Pitcher now has an elaborate proposal on the books to lease the entire Rockwood Manor

Park complex and convert it into The National Outdoor Center. Who knew?

Apparently, the Board of Directors of the Woodrock Homeowners Association, the subdivision that backs up onto Rockwood Park, knew but failed to include Mr. Pitcher's planned presentation on the agenda for their annual meeting. The board members and the few local residents who bothered to attend the annual meeting on November 9 were given the full pitch. Two days later, the *Gazette* ran an article describing major aspects of the proposal and "notifying" the community at large about the "informational meeting" that was to take place on November 17. Six days was enough time for some concerned homeowners in Woodrock to fear the worst, act in concert, and gin up fierce opposition to a proposal they had not yet seen and studied.

The informational meeting that took place at Rockwood Manor did not go smoothly. Mr Pitcher came with dozens of supporters from the community of paddlers and cyclists who were only there to applaud and cheer him on. Residents of Woodrock came loaded for bear, many with fear and anger in their hearts. Some wanted one thing only – to have the meeting cancelled and rescheduled for a date when they would have had timely and official notification; not an article in the newspaper a few days in advance. Many wanted complete information on all the details of the proposal so they could have time to read, study and digest the material before the meeting. Because the two groups were at such loggerheads, opposition was angry and loud. Following the details of Mr. Pitcher's presentation was difficult.

The homeowners are looking at a proposal that shows "stage one" bringing a bistro-style "VeloCafe" and bar; extending the patio and adding a deck for additional outdoor dining, installing wine and coffee bars; bed & breakfast facility; converting the carport to a bike shop; installing kayak storage racks in the garage; adding outdoor retail and rental facilities; outdoor recreation programs; bicycle shop; wildlife rescue & nature center; community garden; and community nature trail system. The neighboring homeowners have valid concerns about security, increased noise, late night partying and rowdy behavior, increased traffic and congestion, overflow parking, loss of "peaceful use and enjoyment" of their own yards and gardens, and declining property values. By shutting out the neighboring community until the proposal was ready to be unveiled, these concerns were not addressed.

One aspect of Mr. Pitcher's presentation came through loud and clear to me – a jarring disconnect. Mr. Pitcher's proposal and presentations make much of his "Serve community first philosophy." He portrays himself as a "Community-based partner" planning a "Community-based development process" and insuring "Community access for events." He lives in Carderock Springs, not in Woodrock, but he maintains that the residents of Woodrock are not sufficiently getting out into the great outdoors, or learning about and enjoying nature in their own neighborhood. How would he know this? And who is he to say that he should change the

life styles of those who live there? He claims that the people who come to Rockwood for weddings, anniversaries and reunions are mostly from out of the area. He misses the fact that people who live in the area rent the facilities for this kind of function and conveniently put up their out-of-town family and friends right around the corner. In short, he came off as a politely arrogant and quietly condescending outsider intent on "improving the fabric of the community" which he doesn't reside in or really know. Had he included all interested members of the local community from the very beginning in a truly "community-based development process", he would not be up against such intense opposition now.

Keeping the local community in the dark about major development proposals guarantees one thing: opposition. Strong opposition! The baby might be a future Einstein, but the bathwater has been poisonously tainted with fear and anger. It is incredibly hard to address people's legitimate concerns and find common ground when mistrust and suspicion have already been sown. The Parks Department must do better in the future.

## **County Cuts Street Tree Planting Program**

### **By Ginny Barnes, Environment Committee Co-Chair**

Each year, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (DOT), the agency charged with maintaining street trees on county roads, removes approximately 2100 trees. Street trees are cut down for a variety of reasons. They can become unstable due to disease or accident. They may be an unavoidable impediment to road improvements or development projects. They are also cut illegally by homeowners who don't know or care that the trees are in the public Right Of Way (ROW). Typically, the County has used a small budget of \$247,000 to replant lost street trees at the rate of about 1700 a year. Replanting has clearly not replaced 100% of what is lost, but it represents an ongoing commitment to our collective green infrastructure. Planting season is from October 15 to May 31st. DOT uses a contractor and if the ground doesn't freeze, they can plant all winter. But not this winter and not even next spring. Why? Because on Tuesday, November 17th the County Council voted to cut the entire budget of the Street Tree Planting Program.

The loss was initially triggered by the County Executive, who offered up the program as a budget cut. These are hard times. Many programs and agency funding were expected to be slashed by certain percentages. The tree pruning and removal budget was down sized, but replanting has been cut altogether. Oddly, the County Executive did not tell or seek the advice of his own Forest Conservation Advisory Committee before he offered to sacrifice this program. They were not even alerted to the impending Council vote.

This is completely unacceptable in a county that has worked hard to create a model National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit under the Federal Clean Water Act. A county that in July of 2007 enacted a "Green Streets" provision into the updated Road Code. A county that claims to be an environmental leader. Philadelphia and Washington D.C. are leading the east coast in their efforts to provide 'green youth' with employment planting and caring for street trees to beautify and shade our streets and sidewalks and improve overall water quality. It has taken us years to see the simple truth that trees are our best line of defense against the ravages of storm water runoff into our local streams. Cutting the entire planting budget will set this County back a long way in terms of addressing water quality commitments to citizens, our County watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay.

Adding this latest blow to our lack of action on even the most obvious flaws in the current Forest Conservation Law and the Council and Executive's failure to come up with a County Tree Ordinance leaves us with a much bleaker future in what are now considered world-wide basic public health issues; clean drinking water, sustainable natural resources and climate change.

## **Oh Deer! (Part 1)** **by Carole Ann Barth, Parks & Recreation Chair**

If you spend any time in the parks, you're probably aware of the skyrocketing deer population. In fact, you can see them everywhere; from small suburban backyards to roadsides; and even in urban areas. It's astonishing to see a group of such large, gangly-looking animals leap effortlessly over obstacles and disappear into the tiniest patch of cover in an instant.

As a child, it was an extremely rare treat to actually see any of the deer that lived in the woods in our neighborhood. Even today, the sudden sight of a deer can still put a catch in my breath. However, I know that these frequent sightings are the symptoms of an ecological disaster.

Deer are most evident during breeding season (October through December.) They are also most unpredictable at this time of year. A few years ago, a deer wandered into a Metro station, hopped the turnstile and proceeded to the platform. Recently, a deer actually jumped into the lion enclosure at the National Zoo. So it's not surprising that 1,841 deer-car collisions were reported in Montgomery County in 2008.

Why are there so many deer? To begin with, deer are an "edge" species. They thrive on the variety of food found in the interface of forest and field. Before European colonization, most of the region was covered in dense woods, so deer habitat was quite limited. As forests were cut, the balance shifted. More deer habitat equaled more deer. In addition, large predators (wolves and mountain lions)

were eliminated, so there was little except for hunting to stop expanding deer numbers.

As suburban development became widespread, the landscape became almost all edge, and hunting was banned or heavily regulated in the newly developed areas. Deer breed quickly; in fact, they can have as many as three young a year. Populations can more than double in two years' time. So in hindsight, it's not surprising that deer populations have rapidly soared in the wake of recent land-use changes.

Just how much has the deer population grown in the eastern U.S.? New Jersey provides an interesting example. Estimates are that in 1500, New Jersey's deer population density was about 9 deer per square mile, spread across the state. Today, the average population density is 50 per square mile. In some natural areas, the density is over 100 animals per square mile.

An average deer eats six-to-eight pounds of plants a day or 1 1/4 tons per year. So it's easy to see how even a few deer can wipe out a garden or significantly damage a farmer's crops. But the lasting damage is to our remaining forests.

Forests heavily browsed by deer have little or no understory. With no saplings and seedlings, there are no replacements for trees that die. With no shrubs and wildflowers, there's no nesting area for shrub or ground-nesting birds. There's no safe place on the forest floor for amphibians and small mammals. In fact, deer sometimes consume baby birds in the nest and rare butterfly eggs along with the plants they're on. And because deer usually prefer native plants, deer overpopulation also helps exotic invasive plants spread and thrive. The result is a forest missing both its structural complexity and its species diversity.

Eventually, with no population controls, food becomes scarce and the deer begin to suffer. Starving, diseased, and suffering from parasites, deer can no longer be selective about what they eat. This has already happened in many areas.

Part two of this article (next month) will look at what management options are available and what is currently being done to manage deer in the parks.

### Some Useful Contacts:

- Removal of Dead Deer from Roads - The Montgomery County Animal Shelter: 240-773-5960
- Report Damage - The Deer Management Work Group: 301-949-2909 (to agricultural crops, gardens and ornamental plants)
- Preventing Deer Damage -The Nuisance Animal Information Line 1(877) 463-6497 or the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Service at 301-590-9650
- General Questions About Deer - The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the Wildlife Division: 301-258-7308

### Emergency Contacts:

- Montgomery County Animal Shelter: 240-773-5960

- M-NCPPC Park Police (Montgomery County): 310-949-3010
- Montgomery County Police: 301-279-8000
- Maryland DNR Wildlife Division (M-F 8AM - 4:30PM): 301-258-7308
- Maryland DNR Wildlife Division (after hours): 410-260-8888

## Montgomery County's Water Resources Functional Plan

The Public Hearing Draft of the Montgomery County Water Resources Functional Plan is now available online at:

<http://bit.ly/MCWRP>

The Water Resources Functional Plan will amend the County's General Plan as required under HB 1141. The Plan examines Montgomery County's land use, growth, and stormwater management in the context of adequate drinking water supplies, wastewater treatment capacity, and water quality regulatory requirements.

The Planning Board has scheduled a public hearing on the Draft Plan at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, December 17, at the Montgomery Regional Office, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Check the Planning Board's agenda closer to this date to make sure it has not been rescheduled. For more information, contact Mark Symborski, Environmental Planning Coordinator, Montgomery County Planning Department, 301-495-4636 or at [mark.symborski@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mark.symborski@mncppc-mc.org).

## State Legislation and Budget by Dan Wilhelm, Committee for Montgomery Representative

The Civic Federation's primary participation with state legislation is through the Committee for Montgomery (CFM). As part of the regular CFM agenda, Senator Madaleno and Delegate Kaiser report to us on a monthly basis, and other senators and delegates speak from time to time. As we all know, there were large budget cuts required during the last legislative session to balance the FY10 budget as well as ongoing operating budget cuts that the Board of Public Works has been undertaking since the end of the last session in April. In addition, the state is facing another 2 billion dollar shortfall during the next session. This could all change when the next quarterly revenue projections are presented in mid-December. For the better part of the last two years, each projection has been worse than the previous one. We hope that trend will stop with the December projection.

Just like last year, the cuts will be difficult. Legislators cannot touch the \$5.5B in aid to primary and secondary schools (out of a \$14.4B operating budget) since the federal stimulus funding prohibits such cuts. There has been a lot of discussion in the last several years about moving some of the \$759M teacher pension funding to the counties. So far that has not happened, but that subject will surely be a major issue this year. As a starting point for such a change, the amounts

would need to be predictable so the counties can plan for it. Such a change would be difficult for Montgomery and many other counties since they are dealing with their own budget shortfalls.

At the annual "road show" the Secretary of Transportation and her staff briefed the Montgomery County Delegation (24 delegates and 8 senators) on proposed new projects and the status on existing projects, both transit and roads. The state's transportation budget is separate from the operating budget. It has also been facing major shortages since people have been buying fewer vehicles and driving less. With the move to more fuel efficient vehicles, increasing the gasoline tax can only be considered as a short-term fix. For FY2010, there will be no new road projects anywhere in the state. The director of the State Highway Administration indicated that the situation has been getting worse since they don't have enough funds to maintain our existing roads. He warned the delegation to expect many complaints from the public over the next year.

The state is working on packages to submit to the federal government to obtain funding for the Purple Line and Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) in Montgomery County and the Red Line in Baltimore. I question where the state will find the funding it would need to go with the federal funds, should the Federal Government approve such funding. The County Council voted in November to recommend the light rail alternative over the bus rapid transit (BRT) for the CCT at almost twice the cost (\$500M to \$1B). While I agree that light rail is more appealing to the public, the Council needs to recognize the fiscal reality. Where is the state going to find the funds? Montgomery County needs a lot of funds for other transit and road projects, which are not forthcoming. The federal stimulus funding has been a short term help for road resurfacing, but what happens when those funds are no longer available?

## Message of Thanks from Huntington Terrace C.A.

By Amy Shiman, President, HTCA

On behalf of the Huntington Terrace Citizens' Association I wish to express our gratitude to MCCF for its support of our residential neighborhood. As you may know, over the last year opposition to Suburban Hospital's intrusive expansion plan has involved the most hearings on record in Montgomery County's Board of Appeals history - 34 days. In particular, Wayne Goldstein of the MCCF participated actively in all the hearings, and provided compelling written information and testimony to help preserve our residential community. We are in particular indebted to his work. It has been extremely time-consuming and has required much volunteer expertise to counter the information submitted by the hospital's 9 consultants and Linowes & Blocher as its counsel. (There were 440 exhibits for the BOA hearing alone, most of which were submitted by the hospital.) And,

of course, it has been challenging in these economic times to fund-raise for Norman Knopf's legal representation.

We are pleased that, like MCCF, the People's Counsel has recently come out in opposition to Suburban Hospital's expansion plan. In particular, Marty Klauber cited "major impacts to the character of Huntington Terrace of this plan including 1) demolition of 23 single-family residences and 2) the increase of traffic to and from the Hospital through the neighborhood ." He also stated in his October 2009 recommendation: "It is time for Suburban Hospital to be sensitive to the Huntington Terrace community's expressed needs, not what the Hospital believes those needs to be". We are hopeful that the hearing officer of the Board of Appeals will similarly recommend denial or remand of this "back-door" commercialization of our residential neighborhood. Approval of such a plan would endorse institutional encroachment, and threaten many single-family neighborhoods across Montgomery County.

**[Editor's note:** it is extremely gratifying when a land use battle comes out in favor of the residents. It is also a prime example of the reason why the Montgomery County Civic Federation continues to be major contributor to the fight to maintain and enhance the quality of life that brought so many of us here in the first place and why we are working to maintain and grow our membership. A fragmented, uninformed and complacent citizenry can too easily be kept in the dark and steamrolled by development forces that serve their own interests and not those of the community at large. Please take a moment to write to the Board of Appeals (100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville 20850) to express your support for the Huntington Terrace neighborhood]

## Important Committees Need Volunteers: By Peggy Dennis, President

Your Civic Federation needs your help! We can't do the great job we want to do without active committees. Unlike our standing committees which do the lion's share of our work, year in and year out, the Nominating Committee and the Annual Awards Committee meet for just a few months during the winter and spring, often by email and phone. The Nominating Committee puts together the slate of nominees for elective office: the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. The Awards Committee proposes recipients for the awards we present in May: the Star Cup, the Gazette Award and the Sentinel Award.

We are also seeking persons to fill the Secretary's position, two "member at-large" positions, and chairs for the Public Finance, Public Safety and Transportation Committees. Please consider these opportunities to serve your community and contact me at 202-744-3019 or hotyakker@comcast.net if you can help with any of these responsibilities.

## Sentinel Column

The Civic Federation prepares a weekly column for the weekly Sentinel newspaper. This is a great opportunity for member associations to voice their opinions and concerns about any number of topics to a county-wide audience. We encourage you to submit proposed columns to our liaison with the Sentinel, Jim Humphrey, at theelms518@earthlink.net.

## Minutes of the November 9 Meeting by Dan Wilhelm, Acting Recording Secretary

**Call to Order:** President Peggy Dennis called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. After everyone introduced themselves, the agenda published in the newsletter was approved with two emergency resolution and one additional discussion item added. The Minutes of the October 12 meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. The treasurer's report was also presented.

**Program:** Peggy Dennis introduced the speaker, Gregory Carmean, Executive Director for the staff that supports the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC). Chuck Lapinski ran the remainder of the program.

The PSC is composed of five commissioners, who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the senate. The Commission staff, People's Council, and companies affected regularly present before the Commission. The public is represented by the People's Council. The Commission historically has approved rates for various utilities: electric, gas, some phone, some water systems and some taxi operations. However, that changed about 10-15 years ago when the electric companies were broken into three parts: generation, bulk distribution (>69KV) and local distribution. The bulk distribution is now regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. (FERC).

Most of the presentation and nearly all of the questions related to the electric power industry. Four companies in Maryland provide local distribution: PEPCO, BGE, Delmarva, and Edition. There are two parts to residential bills: local distribution and generation. Power generation is obtained by a company selling it to customers or where there is no competition, by a process called Standard Offer of Service (SOS). There is competition for large and medium sized users but rarely for residential customers. Today the price under the SOS is based upon 2 year contracts, where 25% is bid every 6 months. The PSC is considering other alternatives. Residents can form an organization to purchase power in bulk, but the big question is what contracting method to use in the purchase of power.

The Federal Government is responsible for approving construction of bulk transmission lines and three have been discussed, with one approved, and one dismissed because it didn't have standing. A new line has not been added since 1999 and the reliability (sufficient capacity to handle different

demands) of the current bulk distribution system is not at the desired level. The PSC is working to reduce power demand by 15% by 2015 compared with 2007. Residential demand dropped last year for the first time. The PSC is also working toward renewable energy goals to increase the percentage of renewable energy (wind, solar, etc). Questions about whether to increase nuclear power (i.e. 3rd generator at Castle Cliffs) are being handled at the national level by the Feds. If approved generally, the third generator is fourth on the national priority list.

**Housing Resolution:** Jim Humphrey, Planning & Land Use Chair, led the discussion of the resolution dealing with revision to the Housing Element section of the General Plan, which was published in the November newsletter. The motion was formally moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

**Historic Preservation Resolution:** Jim Humphrey led the discussion of the resolution dealing with designating three properties as historic. John Jessen and Christine Parker, co-presidents of the Greenwich Forest Citizens Association asked for MCCF support to approve the Greenwich Forest Historical District, one of the three properties in the resolution. Over 70% of the 70 owners in the proposed district support the designation. The others by and large still have questions about what it means to have their house designated historic. The motion was formally moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

**Emergency Resolution on Proposed Closing of Monocacy Elementary School:** Paula Bienenfeld, Education Committee Chair, presented the following emergency resolution:

*“Whereas, on October 23, 2009 Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, put forth an amendment to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-2016 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) recommending the closing of Monocacy Elementary School; and*

*“Whereas, the amendment violates the Board of Education Handbook, which provides for the community to submit "proposed solutions, priorities, or concerns" to a recommendation to close a school by June 1st of that year; and*

*“Whereas, the MCPS Master Plan of June 26, 2009, for long-range planning showed that the population of the Monocacy Elementary School would increase, while in contrast the planning numbers of October 23, 2009 showed instead the populating dropping, with no explanation for the radical change; and*

*“Therefore, the Montgomery County Civic federation opposes the recommendation to close Monocacy Elementary School.”*

The motion received more than the required seconds and after discussion was approved (no one opposed it but several abstained).

## **Emergency Resolution on Growth Policy**

**Amendment:** Jim Humphrey presented the following emergency resolution:

*“Whereas oversight of land use activities is one of the primary responsibilities of the County Council, and its review of the growth policy, which has already been changed from an annual to a biennial cycle, is proposed in Bill 38-09 to occur only once every four years; and,*

*“Whereas the Council plans in 2010 to consider an alternative to the existing Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR), at which time members could determine the appropriate timetable for analysis of, and possible adjustments to, the agreed-upon test(s); and,*

*“Whereas the Council must also consider the appropriate cycle for receipt of the studies now submitted to it as part of the growth policy, such as the Highway Mobility/Transit Usage/Pedestrian Activity Report and an implementation status report for each master and sector plan (with the development activity report for at least one policy area required to be submitted as part of the Biennial Growth Policy, by a provision in the Council Resolution on the Sector Plan Amendment for that area);*

*“Therefore, the Montgomery County Civic Federation strongly urges the Council to postpone action on Bill 38-09 and consider it in the context of the analysis of a PAMR alternative.”*

The motion received more than the required seconds. The major discussion centered on the question of timing: oppose shortening the review cycle now rather than wait until the Council takes up the PAMR in 2010. The motion passed with one abstaining because the voter wanted the four year cycle to be opposed now.

**MCCF Awards Banquet:** Peggy Dennis and Jim Humphrey discussed whether to switch the venue for the MCCF Annual Awards Banquet in May 2010 from New Fortune Restaurant to the Conference Center at Universities at Shady Grove. The price will be higher at the new location since the food will cost \$17.50 per person and there is a \$1000 charge for the room and charges for a number of other items. Also, MCCF must factor in its other costs. The exact charge for each person was not clear but the impression was that it would be around \$35 per person rather than the \$30 from last year. After discussion, a majority voted to try the new venue in 2010.

## **Other Business:**

Peggy Dennis asked for volunteers to interview the candidates for the Planning Board, when that point is reached. Five people volunteered: Peggy Dennis, Dan Wilhelm, Chuck Lapinsk, Mark Adelman and Sharon Dooley.

- Jim Humphrey reported that the Council has accepted three of the eleven Growth Policy recommendations from the Planning Board, but

didn't consider any of our additional recommendations.

- Jim Humphrey reported that for the first time with the Germantown Sector Plan revision, approved by Council last July, the design guidelines are being drafted as a separate document which will not go to the Council but be approved only by the Planning Board.
- Jim Humphrey reported the Planning Board has been asked to transmit the Wheaton Master Plan revision in time for a Council hearing next July. He contends that there is not enough time for Council to approve the master plan and the related sectional map amendment, to implement the zoning changes, before the October 31 deadline for land use decisions in a Council election year. That means for the first time, one council could approve a master plan revision and another the sectional map amendment to implement the zoning.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

## Minutes of the November 18 Executive Committee Meeting By Jim Humphrey, Acting Recording Secretary

Call to order. The meeting at Dan Wilhelm's home was called to order at 7:50 p.m. by President Peggy Dennis, Peggy Dennis, Dan Wilhelm, Jim Humphrey, Bill Schrader, Carole Ann Barth, Jim Zepp, Sandy Vogelgesang, Chuck Lapinski. Attending. The meeting agenda and minutes of October 21 meeting were both approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Schrader then submitted the Treasurer's Report.

The committee discussed programs planned for upcoming MCCF meetings. The program for the December 14 will be on Montgomery County Libraries, with Ms. Dennis coordinating. Speakers will be Parker Hamilton, Director of MC Libraries, and Ann Dorough, President of Friends of the Library. January 11 program will focus on programs to help the elderly age in place, with Ms. Barth coordinating. A split program for February will have speakers on the upcoming CountyStat 311 Call System (Peggy or Dan to coordinate) and on M-NCPPC's new design guidelines to accompany revised master plans (Jim H. to coordinate). March 8th CIP budget. April 12th the county's Operating budget for FY 2011. May 10, Deer.

### Committee Reports-

**Education Committee:** Chairman Paula Bienenfeld reported via email note that the Board of Ed's CIP plan is out, and there was lots of testimony at the BOE from parents: lots of: mold; leaky roofs; kids being taught in storage closets. general neglect of our infrastructure.

**Environment Committee:** Co-chair Ginny Barnes had sent a letter requesting the Parks Department postpone the

meeting on the proposed Public/Private Partnership due to insufficient advance notification. Peggy Dennis had reiterated this message on behalf of MCCF.

**Planning and Land Use:** Mr. Humphrey reported on the Global Mission Church project proposed for property just across county line in Frederick County, with access planned off two-lane road in Montgomery. The Frederick Planning Commission has denied approval, but the Church is appealing with a hearing scheduled for January.

Mr. Humphrey discussed the new process for design guidelines to accompany the Germantown Sector Plan, which was approved by Council in July. The guidelines will not go to Council for approval but are proposed to be adopted by the Planning Board only, following a public meeting on November 30 and Board hearing on December 3.

It was noted that the Board will hold a public hearing on the draft Wheaton Sector Plan revision on November 19, followed by a series of worksessions. The schedule anticipates transmittal to Council next summer, in time for a hearing in July.

A proposal being considered by the Department of Parks for a public-private partnership at Rockwood Manor was discussed.

**Legislation/Committee for Montgomery:** (The report from Mr. Wilhelm is published as a separate article in this newsletter.)

**Public Utilities:** Mr. Lapinski reported receiving a note from Greg Carmean, Executive Director of the Public Services Commission, stating he enjoyed meeting and talking with delegates at the November MCCF meeting.

### Old Business-

The Ad Hoc Screening Committee which will interview candidates to fill the Planning Board vacancy, is awaiting announcement by Council of the dates for the application period.

Based on the vote by delegates at our November 9 meeting to hold the MCCF Annual Awards Ceremony and Banquet next May 14 at the Universities at Shady Grove, Mr. Humphrey was asked to submit a proposed budget and estimate of attendees' cost.

### New Business

Ms. Dennis reminded committee members that it is time to create the MCCF Nominating Committee to consider possible candidates for MCCF office next year and the 2010 Awards Committee.

There were no announcements. Newsletter assignments were made. The next ExComm meeting will be December 16 at Mr. Schrader's home. The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

### Federation Meeting

Monday, December 14, 2009  
7:45 1st Floor Auditorium  
County Council Office Building.  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD

Agenda:

7:45 Call to Order  
7:46 Introductions & Announcements  
7:56 Approval of Meeting Agenda  
7:57 Approval of Minutes from November 9 meeting  
7:58 Treasurer's Report  
**8:00 Program on Mont. County Public Libraries**  
9:15 Committee Reports  
9:40 Old Business  
9:50 New Business  
10:00 Adjournment

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: **Midnight, Saturday, December 19.** Prepare submission as an MS Word, Word Perfect or text-only document, **attach** it to an 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](mailto:djwilhelm@verizon.net).

### NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, December 16, 2009, 7:45 p.m.

At the home of William Schrader

12824 Middlevale Lane

Silver Spring, MD 20906



Official Publication of the  
Montgomery County Civic Federation

Dan Wilhelm, Database Manager  
904 Cannon Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20904  
[DJWILHELM@VERIZON.NET](mailto:DJWILHELM@VERIZON.NET)

First Class Mail

*Address service requested*