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of note

Next MCCF Meeting

Monday, December 14, 2020, 7:30 p.m. online via Zoom. Topic: "Previewing the 2021 Legislative Session."

! **Join the Zoom Meeting Here**

[See further instructions on page 2. No password is required.]

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Meeting Minutes

November 9 Meeting #917 **P. 15**

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Membership Application

Join or Renew Now

SEE FORM

TO PRINT, USE PRINT VERSION

Federation Meeting #918

Monday, December 14, 2020

Online Zoom Session, 7:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: November 13 General Meeting #917 **P.15**
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Announcements
6. December Program: Pre-viewing the 2021 Maryland State Legislative Session with Senator Craig Zucker and Delegate Marc Korman **P.3**
7. Committee Reports
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

About MCCF Meetings

All monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public. They are held on the second Monday of each month, September through June, now at 7:30 p.m.

The December meeting will be held online via Zoom (see **program on page 3**) at 7:30 p.m.:

▮ To be part of the video conference, download the Zoom **Zoom Client for Meetings here.**

▮ Meeting Name: "MCCF Monthly Meeting."

▮ Date and Time: December 14, 2020, 7:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

▮ To **join the Zoom meeting from your browser, use this link.**

▮ To participate by phone (audio only), call 301.715.8592. The meeting ID is **880 6238 7937**. No password should be needed.

We hope you will join us! ▮



The **Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.**, is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public (agenda and details at left).

The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except July and August. It is emailed to delegates, associate members, news media, and local, state, and federal officials. **Recipients are encouraged to forward the *Civic Federation News* to all association members, friends, and neighbors.** Permission is granted to reproduce any article, provided that proper credit is given to the "*Civic Federation News* of the Montgomery County (Md.) Civic Federation."

Civic Federation News

civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, SEE PAGE 22

December Program: Zucker and Korman—Previewing the 2021 Legislative Session

By Alan Bowser, MCCF President

The next General Meeting of the Montgomery County Civic Federation will be Monday, December 14, 2020, 7:30 pm, online via Zoom (see page 1 for the link).

Our guests will be Maryland State Senator Craig Zucker and Maryland State Delegate Marc Korman.

Civic Federation members and the public will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Among the priority issues for the 2021 Session are the State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget outlook, economic development issues, legislative overrides of several of Governor Larry Hogan's 2020 vetoes—including the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan Commission)—and impor-



tant transportation projects like the Purple Line and the proposal for managed lanes on I-495 and I-270.

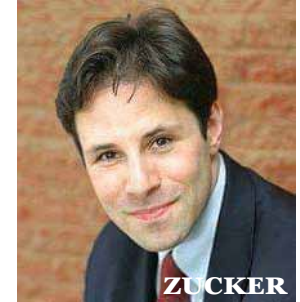
Senator Craig Zucker has been a member of the Maryland Senate since February 2106, representing District 14. A member of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee—where he chairs the Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee—he is the Chair of the Montgomery County Senate Delegation. You can email him at: craig.zucker@senate.state.md.us.

Delegate Marc Korman, pre-

sending District 16, has been a member of the House of Delegates since 2015. A member of the House Appropriations Committee, where he chairs the Transportation and Environment Subcommittee, he is Chair of the Montgomery County House Delegation. His e-mail is: marc.korman@house.state.md.us.

If you have questions in advance, please email them to *president AT montgomerycivic DOT org*.

The meeting is open to the public via Zoom (links to the meeting appear on pages 1 and 2). ■



Montgomery County's Shared Streets Program Provides Socially Distanced Activity

By Alan Bowser, President

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation has a new Shared Streets program that supports residents and businesses by temporarily adjusting uses of public spaces to provide for in-street activities such as biking, walking, outdoor dining, and retail activity. All activity must comply with County and State of Maryland guidelines during the COVID-19 health crisis. [Learn more here.](#)

Since the onset of the corona-

virus pandemic, MCDOT is temporarily modifying existing uses of County-controlled sidewalks, roads, on-street parking, and parking lots to provide more space that allows safe, social distanced activity.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF SHARED STREETS?

- Support temporary changes in how we use our public spaces to best meet today's needs.
- Maintain safety and access.
- Take an equitable approach and provide opportunities across the County.
- Support economic recovery while providing space to maintain social distancing requirements.
- Support the Maryland State Highway Administration in applying similar goals to State roads.

HOW IS MCDOT IMPLEMENTING SHARED STREETS?

Working with community and government partners, MCDOT identifies:

- Priority locations for allowable activity, such as retail pick up, outdoor restaurant space, and permitted social activity.
- Locations where pedestrian volumes are likely to be high and pedestrian space is limited.
- Test changes that could include closing one lane or more to support recreation, using on-street parking for retail or dining activity, or opening parking lots for food hall activity. Some streets may be designated local access only to redirect vehicle traffic and provide more space for physical distancing.



Shared Streets, cont.

Three principal areas of the Shared Streets program are:

I Outdoor Seating and Curbside Retail. Many local restaurants and retail businesses will rely on curbside access and space for outdoor dining as they reopen and expand services. MCDOT is collaborating with representatives from local activity centers to facilitate the closure or restriction of roads to vehicles where feasible to support economic recovery.

I On-Street Walking and Biking. MCDOT is transforming certain local streets into temporary “neighborhood greenways” that welcome pedestrians and bicyclists while limiting vehicles to local traffic only. The initiative, under MCDOT’s “Shared Streets” program, supports residents in the near-term during



the COVID-19 health crisis by providing more neighborhood space for outdoor activity and physical distancing.

I Shared Street Block Permit. Any County resident can apply to bring a smaller version of Shared Streets to neighborhoods around the County.

For more information, [visit the MoCo Shared Streets website.](#) ■

MCCF Needs Your Help!

The Civic Federation needs help in following and organizing its Countywide portfolio of important community issues. We’re looking for volunteers to help us monitor issues in the following areas: education, public safety, public finances, environment, transportation, land use and planning, and legislation. If you’re interested, please email *president AT montgomerycivic DOT org.*

Have ideas for MCCF meeting agenda topics? Have ideas for Civic Federation “Community Heroes? Email *president AT montgomerycivic DOT org.*

Have community project ideas to share and neighborhood best practices? Email *president AT montgomerycivic DOT org.*

Have an article for the newsletter? Email ... *you know who.* ■

MCCF President Testifies at Public Hearing on the 'Thrive 2050' General Plan Draft

[MCCF made the following statement on November 19, 2020, before the Montgomery County Planning Department.]

Chairman Anderson and Planning Board Commissioners, my name is Alan Bowser, and I'm the President of the Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF). The Association Members of the MCCF represent over 150,000 households from civic and homeowners associations across the County.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Draft General Plan. We appreciate the work and time of the Planning Department on this document so far and we thank them for participating in some of our meetings during the last year.

While we understand that those

working on the Plan feel that they have done much more outreach than usual, we think more is needed, especially since residents are focused on many other things right now than the General Plan and these Draft recommendations were just released in October.

By comparison, the District of Columbia, which is 68 square miles compared to 500 square miles in Montgomery County, adopted a comprehensive rewrite of their General Plan in 2006 after many years of public engagement. In addition, they have spent the last four years working on amendments to that 2006 Plan with even more extensive engagement and hearings.

We've heard from members from Silver Spring to Burtonsville, from Clarksburg to Friendship Heights,

and communities in-between. Some of these communities have submitted comments directly to you. Our members have been unanimous in their comments to us that this transformative Plan needs much more community input and discussion if it is to address the County's current and future needs and improve the quality of life for all.

At our September 14 meeting, the MCCF adopted a Resolution calling on the Planning Board to extend the public engagement process in light of the current pandemic crisis.

MCCF strongly supports the idea of a community-based planning framework which values diversity and the need for a dynamic economic foundation. The social and economic disruptions of

MCCF Testimony, cont.

the current pandemic have raised serious concerns about the future of the national and regional economies and the unpredictable impacts on transportation needs, job creation, environmental stewardship, and education, and the implications of the global pandemic—and alternative economic scenarios—must be taken into account into any comprehensive planning framework adopted by the County.

The current announced timetable for the design, finalization, and approval of the proposed General Plan—without adequate public consultation and input—is unreasonable and unsuited for a legitimate community process in which residents can take ownership of the final Plan.

In order to continue planning for

the future with confidence, accuracy, and sensitivity to the needs of the County’s communities, the Planning Board should extend the public

engagement process until after the current health crisis is over.

We appreciate the full consideration of these concerns. ■

‘Community Coalition Letter on Thrive Montgomery 2050’

In November 2020, a group of 27 Montgomery County incorporated municipalities and community organizations that represent over 33,000 Montgomery County residents wrote to the Montgomery County Planning Board to provide comments on the proposed Thrive Montgomery 2050 Plan (the “Plan”), a transformational proposal that will impact all residents, business owners and employees, regional commuters, and visitors for decades to come.

The Montgomery County Civic Federation participated in some of the planning meetings and discus-

sion groups that led to the November letter and supports many of its goals and recommendations. Please note that comments to the Planning Board on the General Plan draft are due by December 10 and it’s very important that civic associations weigh in. Comments should be sent to mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org.

Some excerpts from the Community Coalition letter follow:

“We support many of the principles that the Plan espouses—including equity, affordability, attainability, inclusiveness, social connections,



Coalition Letter, cont.

environmental sustainability, green space, parks, and walkable communities—which will help our County grow and “thrive” under the guidance of an innovative and responsible Plan, and appreciate the hard work that the Planning Board and planning staff have put into its development.

“Before the Planning Board approves a Plan for consideration by the County Council to adopt for use by commercial and residential developers as the basis for large-scale community development projects and tax abatement strategies, we strongly recommend that careful attention be paid to and revisions be made based on the suggestions, concerns, and questions outlined in this letter, which reflect considerable community input and discus-

sion.

“...In order to be a living Plan for the County’s future, the draft Plan needs to reflect, analyze, and factor in the changed realities of living and working that have been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic this year. Among the changes are the new and greater technology and community needs during this time. The draft Plan should take these new realities into account, design for the likelihood that the County’s budget will be severely constrained for some years to come, and a 5-year review should be conducted in order to document the lasting impacts stemming from the pandemic.

“The draft Plan should also reflect the diversity of communities and neighborhoods that exist throughout the County by defining the different ways in which different



types of neighborhoods can achieve the goals of Complete Communities. Montgomery County is not ‘one size fits all,’ and the draft Plan should recognize the County’s differences by establishing separate parameters for determining what is a ‘Complete Community’ in the urban, suburban, and rural parts of the County.

“Also critical to the success of the Plan is making sure that residents fully support the Plan, and that changes and goals are implemented in a manner compatible with the features and characteristics of local neighborhoods that communities cherish.”

The entire Community Coalition letter can be [viewed online here](#). ■

A Message from the MCCF President

I'm writing to remind you to renew your membership in the Montgomery County Civic Federation as we begin our 2020–2021 membership year. Or, if you and your association are not current members of the Civic Fed, we invite you to join us in our work.

As you know, by renewing or joining the Civic Federation, you become part of our County-wide organization in support of our civic associations and homeowners' associations. With your help, we can continue our active advocacy work on behalf of our neighbors and maintain the high level of service we provide to Montgomery County's residents.

We are fortunate to have a great group of Civic Federation officers who give selflessly of their time to

monitor programs, policies, and events at the County and State levels, and who work tirelessly to educate our members and advocate for valuable changes in policies.

We invite the participation of you and your organization at our meetings and in the work of our Executive Committee and in our subject-matter committees. And there are many opportunities for your delegates to serve as chairs of Civic Fed committees and to be part of our Executive Committee team.

Why support the Civic Fed?

■ For ninety-five years, the MCCF has been devoted to improving the quality of life in Montgomery County, advocating for improvements in the infrastructure of the County, and evaluating and discussing issues of concern to its members.

■ We are the only Montgomery County-wide membership organization which addresses critical issues across a wide spectrum, including land use and planning, public safety, environment, education, public finance, health, and community development.

■ We have successfully mobilized community support to make meaningful changes in transportation, environmental, and public accountability issues.

■ With member feedback, communications, resolutions, and testimony are provided to the County government, State government, and bi-County agencies on a regular basis.

For example, recently, with help from our members, our efforts to promote good government resulted in the Maryland State Legislature creating new Inspector General au-



President's Message, cont.

thority for Montgomery County Public Schools, the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the Civic Federation, we seek to expand our membership and to enhance the effectiveness of our education and advocacy mission. We can do that with your membership.

You join the Civic Federation online [here](#) and you can pay via PayPal after submitting your application.

We'll be meeting virtually for the foreseeable future due to the coronavirus pandemic, so it will be easier to participate in our regular monthly and special meetings.

Thank you for your time and we hope to see you soon.

—Alan Bowser, President ■

Montgomery County Tightens COVID-19 Restrictions

Amid skyrocketing community spread of COVID-19, Montgomery County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles announced that, effective 5 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 24, indoor gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited and mandates that face coverings are required at all times outdoors and also indoors in public facilities. Montgomery County joins other counties in the state, such as Prince George's and Howard County, that have reduced gatherings to 10 people or less. County officials are urging residents to stay home and limit social gatherings, including with family members, leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday.

The new restriction on gatherings was put in place to curtail the number of cases that come from family and other gatherings. Ac-

ording to state contact tracing data, gatherings are a major source of COVID-19 transmissions. The new provision does not apply to businesses, establishments, and facilities that are permitted to operate as outlined in Executive Order 122-20, which permits up to 25 percent occupancy or 25 people, whichever is lower. Outdoor gatherings of more than 25 people continue to be prohibited.

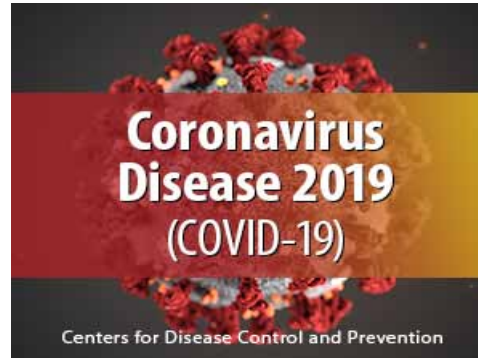
"We are entering a phase of COVID-19 that is very worrisome, and we need every resident to understand what that means," said Dr. Gayles. "It is critical that each one of us takes this directive seriously and does our part to slow the spread. Contact tracing data indicates that family and group gatherings are where a significant number of the

COVID Restrictions, cont.

state's cases are occurring. It is extremely important that each of us thinks about our collective responsibility to help slow down the spread of COVID-19. The case counts are continuing to rise at an alarming rate, and we need to take more drastic steps to reduce transmission.”

There were 213 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Montgomery County as reported Nov. 23 by the Maryland Department of Health. This is an increase of more than 2,000 cases in the past week. As of press time, Montgomery County had more than 33,905 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 918 deaths.

Wearing a mask is the law in Montgomery County and throughout Maryland. Clarified in the directive is the definition of what constitutes a face covering—only wearing a plastic



face shield does not satisfy the face covering mandate, nor does wearing a face covering with a valve. These examples have been shown to be ineffective at preventing the spread of the aerosol droplets that can cause COVID-19.

For the latest COVID-19 updates, visit the [County's COVID-19 website](#) and follow Montgomery County on Facebook at [MontgomeryCountyInfo](#) and Twitter [@MontgomeryCoMD](#). ■

CIVIC FED TONIGHT!

***SEEKING POSSIBLE SPEAKERS
FOR YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION
MEETINGS?***

Members of the MCCF Executive Committee have extensive experience in issues such as transportation, land use and zoning, schools, parks, environmental concerns, taxes, and public spending. Plus, they have a community-oriented perspective on these matters. If you would like an executive committee member to speak at a meeting, contact President Alan Bowser at *president AT montgomerycivic DOT org*. Include topics/possible dates.

Five Pending Local and BiCounty Bills Supported by the MCCF Executive Committee

The MCCF Executive Committee voted to provide testimony in support of the following Local and BiCounty Bills at the Montgomery County Delegation's public hearings on December 1 and December 8.

The Bills will be discussed at the upcoming December 14th MCCF General Meeting and the Executive Committee recommends support of the membership.

All proposed Local and BiCounty Bills can be found on the [Montgomery County Delegation webpage](#).

MC 6-21: MONTGOMERY COUNTY - PUBLIC ETHICS - PAYMENTS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS

Requested by Delegates Acevero and Carr.

This Bill is related to the disclosure of certain payments to certain candidates and elected officials in Montgomery County and certain penalties; prohibits an applicant or an applicant's agent from making a payment to an elected official in Montgomery County, or a slate that includes an elected official, during the pendency of a certain application; prohibits an elected official from voting or participating in a proceeding on a certain application if certain persons received a payment during a certain period, subject to certain exceptions; requires an applicant or an applicant's agent to file a certain affidavit related to payments involving an elected official.

MC 7-21: MONTGOMERY COUNTY - HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

COMMISSION - CLOSED SESSIONS

Requested by Delegate Carr.

This Bill would limit the circumstances under which the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County or a committee of the Montgomery Commission may meet in closed session. It would prohibit the Montgomery Commission or a committee of the Montgomery Commission from discussing or acting on certain matters while meeting in closed session.

MC 14-21: MONTGOMERY COUNTY - PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCING - EXPANSION

Requested by Delegates Luedtke & Moon.

This is enabling legislation for



Five Bills, cont.

the purpose of authorizing the governing body of Montgomery County to establish, by law, a system of public campaign financing for candidates for the offices of State's Attorney, Sheriff, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Register of Wills; makes a technical correction.

MC/PG 100-21: WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION - VIDEO STREAMING AND ARCHIVING MEETINGS AND LATE PAYMENT CHARGES *Requested by Delegate Charkoudian.*

This Bill would require the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission to stream live video of the open meetings of the Commission; requires the Commission to maintain on its website a complete

and unedited archived video recording of certain live-streamed videos of the open meetings; alters the amount of a certain late payment charge imposed by the Commission for unpaid water and sewer usage charges under certain circumstances.

MC/PG 101-21: MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION — MANDATORY REFERRAL REVIEW

Requested by Delegates Carr, Crutchfield, Moon, Shetty, and Solomon, and Senator Waldstreicher.

This Bill establishes that a certain referral to the Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission is deemed approved under certain circumstances only if there is a complete submission that can be adequately reviewed

by the Commission; requires the Commission to notify a certain submitting entity within a certain period of time regarding whether a certain submission or amendment to a submission is complete and accepted or rejected as incomplete; requires the Commission to provide certain information to a submitting entity under certain circumstances; requires the Commission to act on a certain amended submission within a certain period of time; authorizes a submitting entity to give certain notice to the Commission that the entity is unable to provide certain additional information on a certain submission through reasonable means under certain circumstances; requires the Commission to consider a certain submission as complete and take certain action within a certain period of time. ■

In Search of Volunteers for 2021 MCCF Awards Committee, Nominations

By Peggy Dennis, Chair, Legislative Committee

The Civic Federation's Annual Awards Committee needs to be constituted if we are to have awards in 2021. We need volunteers to serve on this committee. Even if you cannot volunteer to serve on this committee, please start thinking now about individuals and/or groups you would like to nominate for an award. Here are the descriptions of the awards and the rationale for each award:

I The Wayne Goldstein Award: Awarded to an individual or group for outstanding service to the people of Montgomery County.

I The Sentinel Award:



ALAN BOWSER (LEFT) IS PRESENTED WITH 2019'S STAR CUP BY U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR MARYLAND JAMIE RASKIN

Sponsored by *The Montgomery Sentinel* newspaper and awarded to an individual or group for a significant contribution to good government at the local level.

I The Star Cup: Sponsored by the Federation and to be awarded to a Delegate or Committee of the Federation for outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County.

Please contact our MCCF President, Alan Bowser, by email [[president AT montgomerycivic DOT org](mailto:president@montgomerycivic.org)] if you have a nomination or if you are willing to serve on the Awards Committee. We cannot do this without your help! ■

Minutes of November 9, 2020, MCCF General Meeting #917, Virtual Zoom Meeting

By Karen Cordry, Recording Secretary

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the General Meeting was held via Zoom as a virtual meeting. The time of the meeting was revised to 7:30 p.m.

Call to Order: President Alan Bowser called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. There were approximately 50 participants online over the course of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda: It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved; motion was so approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson reported that, for the period from July 1 to date, there is a net

surplus of \$284. The expenses were for the website and membership in the Committee for Montgomery. Our bank balance is \$9,617.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Preliminary results of general election on ballot questions as of that morning. State Question 1 – 75% yes, Question 2 – 67% yes. Question A – 62% yes, Question B – 43% yes; Question C – 61% yes, Question D – 43% yes. There are approximately 160,000 ballots still to be counted.

COMMUNITY HERO

This month's winner was Louis Willen of the Cherrywood HOA Board of Directors, Delegate to Greater Olney Civic Association, and Chair of the MCCF Public Utilities Committee. He is receiving the

award based on his work with on analyzing the homeowner's tax credit structure in Maryland generally and Montgomery County specifically and whether it is being properly applied.

This is a credit on property taxes granted by the State and the County to persons with limited income and assets. Louis filed a complaint several years ago with the State that it was underpaying the credit. It was eventually determined that, in Montgomery County alone, last year some \$4 million of credits were not properly issued to homeowners. The State has agreed to pay properly going forward but there has not yet been an agreement to pay refunds. Del. Al Carr will be pursuing legislation to require refunds and MCCF should support that.

November Minutes, cont.

PROGRAM: TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Moderator: Jerry Garson, Chair,
MCCF Transportation Committee

Speakers:

■ Kevin Quinn, Administrator, MD
DOT MTA

■ Matthew Pollack, Executive
Director, MTA Transit Development
and Delivery;

■ Chris Conklin, Director, MC DOT

■ Del. Jared Solomon, House Ap-
propriations Committee

Kevin Quinn

Provided an update on COVID-19's impacts on transit and adjustments that have been made to date. **His PowerPoint will be available on the MCCF website.**

He noted that the State has the

12th largest transit system nationally but had to make numerous adjustments when COVID hit. Schedules were deeply reduced initially but that was largely reversed in July. Substantial additional efforts to clean and sanitize vehicles and to require masks, social distancing, employee screening and other protective measures have been added.

Like all transit agencies, including WMATA, MTA is facing serious revenue issues due to decline in usage of transit and gas tax revenue reduction. Funding through the CARES Act mitigated the impacts but that has run out. MDOT is actively advocating for added funding. Ridership showed a huge drop initially but there has been some recovery since then, primarily in core bus service, while MARC trains, commuter buses, and Metro remain very low. It is unclear how telework

will continue to affect services when/if COVID's effects subside. They are continuing to work on technology upgrades including better ticketing apps and integrating information on scheduling and arrivals.

Matthew Pollack

Spoke on the current situation with respect to the Purple Line. **His PowerPoint will be available on the MCCF website.**

This summer, the two supervising contractors sent in notices of termination based on assertions of extended delay in the project. The state contests that but, as of now, they have been allowed to cease work. One contractor is still working with the State to try to negotiate a continued agreement but, to keep work going, MDOT has taken assignments of all of the operating

November Minutes, cont.

contracts and is working to resume the process. MDOT does still intend to bring on a new private manager to complete the work on the project.

Chris Conklin

Gave a general update on County transit and transportation efforts in light of Covid. The County has been working to adjust street usage to assist restaurants with outdoor dining. The County has worked continuously to adjust services to match ridership declines while still providing essential services to households without cars. The County has gone ahead with implementing the Flash Bus service on Route 29 since most of the costs had already been sunk. On the public safety side, there was some reduction in traffic-reduced accidents and injuries, although there has been

some increased speeding and single car accidents but, as we have moved into fall, problems have rebounded. In White Flint area, they're working on protected bike trails.

Del. Jared Solomon

Spoke on legislative activities. There is a formal bipartisan Transit Caucus with members ranging from rural districts to downtown Baltimore. They have been looking at funding for the Purple Line and at whether the I-495/I-270 toll lane project should go forward. A number of bills, including ones to provide more oversight of the process for these public-private partnerships, and to deal with pedestrian safety issues, were considered this year but, due to the shortened session from COVID, were not able to get through both houses but will be back on the agenda in 2021. They are also work-

ing on expanding MARC and integrating it in an East Coast network.

After the presentations, there were questions from the audience, with the largest number focused on the Purple Line and how, when, and whether it would be possible to get the project back on track. Both Mr. Quinn and Mr. Pollack emphasized that work was continuing now but that they definitely intended to bring a new managing entity to complete the work since the scope of effort needed to manage a project this size is not something the State maintains on staff. They are still in discussions with the original partner but, if those do not work out, they will resolicit the project and take bids for a new entity. Companies have reached out to them to express interest so they do believe it will be possible to fill that spot. Del. Solomon also noted

November Minutes, cont.

that the legislative work is now being shown on Zoom and this can actually be a boon in terms of allowing more public participation by reducing the burden of coming to Annapolis and waiting on the vagaries of the hearing times.

COMMITTEE REPORTS*Legislation*

■ Peggy Dennis stated that she will send out an email summarizing upcoming bills. Sue Schumacher will gather information on bills relating to Montgomery County. Rep. Marc Korman and Senator Craig Zucker will be speakers on the December program with an update on the upcoming session.

Land Use and Planning

■ Alan Bowser will testify on behalf

of Civic Fed at the Planning Board's 11/19 hearing on the proposed revisions to the County's General Plan called "Thrive Montgomery 2050." The Council is meeting on the Growth policy (AKA Subdivision Staging Policy) tomorrow.

Environment

■ Alan Bowser noted that we have been working with two groups dealing with stormwater issues to help them coordinate their positions.

■ Conservation Montgomery will be holding its annual meeting on Nov. 13 and will be giving a memorial award to Lisa Feldt, former Director of County DEP, who passed away earlier this year in a car accident.

Public Safety

■ The County is conducting a survey on public safety issues and it will be helpful if Associations and

residents weigh in on those issues. There is work ongoing with respect to the "reimagining the police" topic, although the contract for that work was awarded on a "no bid" basis and there are concerns in that regard.

Public Utilities

■ Louis Wilen notes that there is planning about implementing an Advanced Metering System at WSSC which purportedly will save some \$200+ million over 20 years. However, there is dispute over those claims and Del. Carr has been looking into whether it's a good idea.

NEW BUSINESS

■ MCCF is looking for a database manager to work on membership and dues tracking so if anyone knows someone, let Alan know.

Adjournment at 9:35 p.m. ■

MCCF Executive Committee Meeting Minutes from October 22, 2020

By Karen Cordry, Recording Secretary

The meeting was convened by Zoom at 7:02 p.m.

Attendees: Alan Bowser, Jerry Garson, Bailey Condrey, Karen Cordry, Jacquie Bokow (part), Sue Schumacher, Tim Willard, and Peggy Dennis.

Approval of Agenda: Motion made, seconded, and approved

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson said we'd received \$800 in dues since July 1 and have spent \$515 for a net surplus of \$285. The payments were for \$215 for the website and \$300 for Committee for Montgomery. The account balance is \$9,617.

OLD BUSINESS

■ Sue and Alan will be concentrating on membership outreach to associations.

■ With respect to the pending ballot initiatives, it was confirmed that our position was on the website and the Facebook page.

UPCOMING MEETING

The program at the next meeting will be on transit and transportation issues. Speakers will be Kevin Quinn, Chair of the Maryland Transit Administration; Matthew Pollack, Exec. Dir. of the Purple Line project; and David Frasier-Hidalgo, Chair of the Transportation Subcommittee in the Maryland House. They will be asked for a status report on current projects, including the I-495/270 proposals and then the meeting will

be open for general discussion. The comment period on the DEIS for the I-495/270 project ends Nov. 9. One main concern is whether it is needed now—or ever.

A Community Hero award will be presented to Louis Wilen at the November meeting. He did an audit of homeowner property tax credits and determined that Montgomery County homeowners have been overcharged for years. ([See newsletter article.](#))

OTHER BUSINESS

■ There was discussion of ZTA 20-30, which is purportedly designed to increase building of homes accessible to seniors needing assisted living but appears likely to simplify building luxury townhomes in single family neighborhoods. We will review

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this further before deciding whether to take a position thereon.

■ The County Hearing on the General Plan (Thrive Montgomery) will be on November 19th. Alan has signed up to testify for the Civic Fed. He and Harriet will work on the testimony. Alan will prepare an email to Gwen Wright seeking more detailed responses to the question raised during the October meeting. If we get answers back in time, they will be included in the newsletters.

■ Alan and Bailey will work on creating a better outreach process to media, the delegates, members, etc. so there can be a single button push to get out information.

COMMITTEE REPORTS*Legislation*

■ Sue will look at the County

Council's agenda; Jerry will look at pending transportation activities, and Peggy will check in on what's planned in Annapolis. It was also noted that the December program will be on the 2021 legislative session in Annapolis with Rep. Korman and Sen. Zucker. Marc Elrich will be the January program speaker.

Education

■ There will be a request for additional funding to remedy HVAC problems in the schools. Members Jawando and Reimer are considering a proposal to remove school Resource Officers but the proposal is controversial and the PTA may oppose.

Environment

■ The Council is working on implementing a version of the Internal Green Construction Code, which would be a considerable improve-

ment on the current version.

■ On Monday, 10/19, there will be a meeting with the two stormwater/stream restoration groups to help coordinate their positions so they could present a common front on pending issues. Conservation Montgomery has noted that there is a lot of development being proposed in the 10 Mile Creek area.

■ Another pending issue is whether to approve solar farms in the Agricultural Reserve. The Sierra Club is supporting use of up to 1,900 acres (of the total of 37,000 in the reserve) while some other groups oppose. Peggy noted that there had been a recent piece on public radio where solar farms had been successfully combined with animal grazing.

Newsletter items were discussed.

Adjournment was at 8:07 p.m. ■

MCCF Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for November 19, 2020

By Karen Cordry, Recording Secretary

The meeting was convened via Zoom at 7:02 p.m.

Attendees: Alan Bowser, Jerry Garson, Bailey Condrey, Karen Cordry, Jacquie Bokow (part), Sue Schumacher, and Harriet Quinn.

Agenda Approved: Motion made, seconded, and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson said we'd received \$1,028 in dues since July 1 and have spent \$515 for a net surplus of \$513. The account balance is \$9,762.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

■ Potential awardees for Commu-

nity Heroes and criteria for awardee selection were discussed. The previously adopted form for submission will be distributed.

■ The discussion topic for the December 14 General Meeting is the 2021 General Assembly Session with guest speakers Sen. Craig Zucker and Rep. Marc Korman, who are the Montgomery Delegation Chairs. Questions can be submitted to Alan in advance.

■ January's meeting topic will be a discussion with County Executive Elrich.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership

■ Alan spoke with several civic associations about joining. We are looking to add membership database software and a coordinator.

Education

■ MCPS is hoping to bring students back in person early next year but this is still unsettled.

Planning/Land Use

■ Alan testified on behalf of MCCF at the November 19 Planning Board Hearing on the proposed changes to the General Plan that were released by Planning Staff in October. Based on the previous MCCF resolution, Alan reiterated the MCCF request that further action be postponed until the public health emergency has subsided and the Staff can present their recommendations at public meetings. More outreach is needed on their recommendations, which include eliminating zones for single family dwellings. MCCF testimony is

Nov. ExCom Minutes, cont.

in the newsletter and on the website.

Transportation

■ Jerry will get the November presentation from Maryland Transit Administration Administrator Kevin Quinn to upload to MCCF's website.

■ MCCF's resolution regarding the MDOT Managed Lanes Study was included in comments submitted to MDOT on the Draft EIS on the I-495/270 project, agreeing and with the Planning Commission that further review is needed and that any further action should be postponed until the public emergency caused by COVID-19 has ended.

Environment

■ It was noted that changes in human activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic affected global

energy consumption and associated CO2 emissions.

Newsletter items were discussed.

Adjournment: It was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. ■

Montgomery County Civic Federation

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