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Like MCCF's Facebook Page and follow us on Twitter.

TO PRINT, USE PRINT VERSION

of note

Next MCCF Meeting #976

July 13, 2026, 7:00 p.m. *online via Zoom*. Topic: "Data Centers, Continued."

■ **Join the Zoom Meeting Here**
[See further instructions on page 2. No password is required.]

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June Meeting Minutes

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Executive Committee Meeting **P. 17**

Membership Application

JOIN ONLINE | MAIL-IN FORM

Federation Meeting #976

Monday, July 13, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Online Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: June Annual Awards **P.12**
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Announcements
6. July Program: Continuing Our Data Center Education **P.5**
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.

The July meeting will be held online via Zoom (see page 5 for program) at 7:00 p.m.:

■ To be part of the video conference, first **visit the Zoom website** to download the program for your phone or computer.

■ **Date and Time:** Monday, July 13, 2026, 7:00 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 **885 7214 5979**. No password is required.

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 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 17

President's Letter: Dear Delegates and Members,

With the June primary behind us, Montgomery County is preparing for significant leadership changes, including Councilmember Will Jawando's victory in the Democratic primary for County Executive and County Executive Marc Elrich's lead in the at-large Council race. As new leaders prepare to take office, MCCF's role is clear: to keep community voices organized, informed, and at the table.

That will require both engagement and independence. MCCF will seek strong, constructive working relationships with the next County Executive, the County Council, Council staff, and our state delegation while bringing facts, member experience, and practical solutions early enough to affect policy.

Several issues will require sus-

tained attention.

Housing policy remains at the top of the list. Montgomery County needs more housing at price points people can actually afford to rent or buy, including realistic paths to homeownership. But early experience with corridor planning shows why the details matter. New housing policy should focus on smart solutions that expand genuinely affordable and attainable options, pair growth with community amenities and infrastructure, and reduce the risk that modest existing homes are replaced by units beyond the reach of many current residents.

Data centers are another urgent issue. The proposed Dickerson data center campus has shown how unprepared Montgomery County is for facilities of this scale. Before the

County considers approvals for large data centers, it needs clear, enforceable standards for:

- zoning and land-use compatibility;
- electric demand, transmission needs, and who pays for related infrastructure;
- water use, stormwater, and impacts on the Potomac River and the Agricultural Reserve;
- noise, air emissions, backup generators, battery storage, and public safety risks;
- fiscal impacts, tax incentives, and long-term community costs; and
- meaningful public notice, review, and community participation.

The six-month pause on data center permits helps, but it is not enough given the amount of work

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Dear Delegates, cont.

that needs to be done. MCCF should support an extension, ideally toward the two-year moratorium Councilmember Jawando proposed, so County leaders have enough time to develop real standards rather than delay the same unresolved questions.

With that context, Cheryl Gannon, MCCF First Vice President, and I worked with the Executive Committee to identify priorities for the coming year. We agreed that MCCF should focus on four broad goals:

1. Grow MCCF's reach and membership. We will continue outreach to civic associations, community groups, and underrepresented areas of the county. There is strength in numbers. Where neighborhoods do not have an active association, we encourage existing

associations to consider whether nearby unrepresented communities can be welcomed and included.

2. Build effective relationships with public officials while maintaining MCCF's independent voice. We will work to establish constructive relationships with the next County Executive's team, County Councilmembers and staff, and our state delegation. Just as important, MCCF can strengthen grassroots operations by helping member associations develop their own relationships with public officials and staff. These relationships matter because civic associations need access early in the policy process, when community input can still shape decisions.

3. Make MCCF a practical information hub for community associations. Members need timely, usable information. MCCF

can help by providing updates on county and state policy issues in formats that associations can adapt and share with their own communities, including short summaries, flyers, emails, listserv posts, meeting notes, and suggested grassroots actions.

4. Develop a clearer advocacy framework. MCCF should identify priority issues for county and state advocacy, clarify where MCCF should lead or support, and develop a legislative scorecard so members can better understand how elected officials vote on issues important to civic associations and county residents.

These goals are ambitious, but they are practical. They build on MCCF's history as a countywide civic organization that helps residents understand public policy, organize effectively, and insist on transparent

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Dear Delegates, cont.

and accountable government.

On a personal note, I want to thank Cheryl Gannon for the excellent leadership she provided as MCCF President over the past two years. I am especially grateful that she will continue to serve MCCF as First Vice President and will continue to guide and support me in this new role.

As always, thank you for your membership, your participation, and the work you do in your own communities.

—Linda Nemec
President, MCCF ■

July's Program

Our July program will continue our education on data centers, focusing on impacts on the electrical grid and consumer costs. Our invited speaker is David S. Lapp, Maryland Office of People's Counsel.

Lapp was appointed People's Counsel in 2021 by Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh. Lapp has 30 years of combined experience as a lawyer, policy analyst, and writer focusing on public policy and corporate accountability in important segments of the economy. His positions have required mastery of complicated legal issues and competing public policy goals. As an attorney, his work has emphasized state and federal regulatory policy in the utility, tobacco, and healthcare industries.

Until his appointment as Peo-



DAVID LAPP

ple's Counsel, Lapp worked from 2004–2020 as an Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Attorney General of Maryland, after which he served as Deputy Counsel for the Maryland Department of Health. ■

Why Renew Your Membership or Join MCCF

By Liz Joyce, MCCF Second Vice President

We are excited to launch a new year under the leadership of President Linda Nemec, whose rich experience as an activist promises to bring yet another year of impressive gains. As we begin our 2026-2027 season, we take pride in MCCF's growing impact on our state and county under outgoing President Cheryl Gannon.

Our monthly meetings, open to all, have featured an impressive array of speakers and topics. These include programs on the Office of the People's Counsel (rejected again by the Council); water and sewer infrastructure; the river interceptor break; Governor Moore's Starter and Silver Homes bill; County

Executive Marc Elrich's in-person budget analysis; transportation and pedestrian safety; toxic plastics and artificial turf; hot issues in MCPS education policy by Lyric Winick and Ricky Robiero; and a spotlight on data center issues by Conservation Montgomery's Caroline Taylor. Transportation chair Jerry Garson has updated us on the Purple Line, and former Delegate Al Carr has examined transparency deficits in county government.

Miranda Spivack, author of *Backroom Deals in Our Backyards*, also highlighted the nationwide non-transparency epidemic in a special September 2025 event, and MCCF held a county executive candidate forum this spring.

Officers and members have testified on the pros and cons of all major

Council housing bills in the past several years, and in support of the Office of the People's Counsel. Such testimony, which requires extensive and time-consuming research, offers members and officials unique perspectives on these complex issues. Especially because we have so few local newspapers, MCCF's work represents a unique resource to the public and our members.

For current members, our Simplidues database will send you a reminder email when it's time to renew, with instructions for updating your delegates. For prospective and former members, we urge you to join MCCF, a unique resource for Montgomery County. [Click here to access Simplidues](#) and/or email me at veep2@montgomerycivic.org. ■

MCCF Testimony on Expedited Bills 19-26 and 24-26—Data Center Moratoriums

[MCCF 1st Vice President Cheryl Gannon testified June 16, 2026, at a public hearing before the Montgomery County Council on bills to implement a moratorium on data centers. There were a number of other individuals and organizations that also testified. The [testimony file for Expedited Bill 19-26 can be found here](#) [MCCF's is #25]; the [testimony file for Expedited Bill 24-26 can be found here](#) [MCCF's testimony is #75]. MCCF testimony is below.]

Good afternoon, Council President Fani-González and members of the County Council. My name is Cheryl Gannon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

The Montgomery County Civic Federation is an umbrella organization of civic associations across the

county. Our member associations work hard every day to help residents understand and respond to land-use, transportation, environmental, infrastructure, and public-safety decisions that affect their neighborhoods. Again and again, our communities find themselves struggling to evaluate major proposals only after those proposals are already well advanced.

That is why the Montgomery County Civic Federation supports a meaningful pause in data center permitting and urges the Council to enact Expedited Bill 24-26, establishing a two-year moratorium. We thank Councilmember Jawando for introducing this important bill. A significant pause is needed to deal with very complex issues, some of which are under the purview of state

or federal regulators and get this right for the future of the county.

We are unable to support Bill 19-26 for two reasons. First, six months is not enough time to develop a complete regulatory framework, obtain the necessary technical information, engage affected communities and ensure that County residents are protected from costs and negative impacts. One example is that the cost allocations of electrical infrastructure and upgrades and requires coordination with state and federal regulators. The County must coordinate with state and regional agencies, evaluate technical studies, develop zoning and environmental standards, determine fiscal and utility impacts, create an acceptable tax rate for these sites—which may also

MORE

Data Center Moratoriums, cont.

require state action—and provide communities with a meaningful opportunity to participate.

Second, the bill carves out an exception for the Dickerson site, which is already proceeding even though we do not have a regulatory or permitting structure here for data centers. The site is proceeding in the Planning department process under a structure designed for cable communications. We need to first establish a structure for data centers before proceeding. We also ask that the Council ask the Planning Department to halt consideration of the Dickerson site until a regulatory structure is in place. A two-year moratorium does not mean rejecting data centers permanently. It means taking the time necessary to determine where, at what scale, and

under what enforceable conditions they may be appropriate.

This is not a position against technology or economic development. Data centers support essential digital services and—with appropriate regulations and tax structure—they may provide tax revenue and opportunities to reuse previously developed industrial land.

But the newest hyperscale and artificial-intelligence data centers are not ordinary commercial buildings. They are large industrial facilities whose demands for electricity, water, cooling, backup power, and supporting infrastructure can affect not only the immediate community but residents and ratepayers throughout Montgomery County.

The proposed data-center campus at the former Dickerson station makes these concerns especially urgent. Publicly available materials

describe a campus with a potential electrical capacity of approximately 360 megawatts, together with substations, backup generators, battery storage, warehouses, and cooling infrastructure near the Potomac River, Agricultural Reserve, and C&O Canal.

A project of this scale could contribute to regional transmission and generation needs, utility costs, emergency-response demands, environmental impacts, and infrastructure decisions affecting residents far beyond the site itself. It could also establish a precedent for how data centers are reviewed elsewhere in Montgomery County.

Yet the County still lacks publicly available, independently reviewed answers to fundamental questions.

How much electricity would the campus use at full buildout?

MORE

Data Center Moratoriums, cont.

What transmission, generation, and substation improvements would be required? Who would pay for them? How would the County ensure that residential and small-business customers are not required to subsidize private development through higher electric bills? It is not enough to say we will require data centers to pay the costs. That result will require working with federal and state regulators. It cannot be done by County Council fiat.

How much Potomac River water would be withdrawn during ordinary operations and during the hottest and driest periods? How much would be consumed rather than returned? What protections would govern discharge temperature, chemicals, and drought operations? Once-through cooling should be

banned, but refrigeration is required to prevent changes in water temperature, and the refrigeration will increase electrical use. There are many such tradeoffs to be considered.

How many diesel generators or other forms of backup generation would be installed? What would be the cumulative effects on air quality, greenhouse-gas emissions, and noise?

What risks would be created by a very large battery-energy-storage facility? Does Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service have the specialized equipment, training, and staffing necessary to respond? Who would pay for that additional capacity?

What would be the net fiscal benefit to the County after tax incentives, infrastructure costs, emergency services, environmental monitor-

ing, and other public expenses are considered?

These questions matter to civic associations because they reflect a broader concern that communities often face: major projects are presented as economic opportunities before the full public costs, tradeoffs, and long-term effects have been disclosed.

Montgomery County should not approve a new class of intensive industrial development first and develop the governing rules afterward. Residents and civic associations need access to clear, understandable information early enough to influence decisions—not after essential approvals have been obtained.

A campus drawing hundreds of megawatts of electricity, potentially using river water and relying on extensive backup-power and battery

MORE

Data Center Moratoriums, cont.

systems requires its own clear definition and standards.

Those standards should address, at a minimum:

- ▮ total and peak electricity demand;
- ▮ responsibility for grid and infrastructure costs;
- ▮ water withdrawal, consumption, discharge, and drought curtailment;
- ▮ air emissions and backup generation;
- ▮ continuous, low-frequency, and nighttime noise;
- ▮ battery-storage and fire-safety risks;
- ▮ setbacks from homes, schools, parks, and environmentally sensitive areas;
- ▮ protection of forests, agricultural land, and historic resources;
- ▮ construction traffic and road

damage;

- ▮ emergency-response costs;
- ▮ tax rates and incentives and net fiscal benefits;
- ▮ ongoing monitoring and public reporting; and
- ▮ decommissioning requirements and financial assurance.

The Civic Federation is particularly concerned that standards must be based on cumulative impacts, not evaluated one facility or one component at a time. The cumulative effects on electricity demand, transmission infrastructure, water resources, air quality, noise, roads, and public services could be far greater than the impact of any single site. We know, for example, that there is a large privately owned parcel in Germantown that is being marketed as a potential data center site.

Claims that information is proprietary should not prevent

disclosure of a project's resource consumption, environmental effects, infrastructure demands, public costs, or compliance with County standards.

The Council should establish a transparent process involving civic and community associations, environmental and agricultural organizations, ratepayer advocates, public-safety officials, utility and water agencies, technical experts, and industry representatives.

Montgomery County should welcome responsible innovation. But responsible innovation requires complete information, clear rules, meaningful community participation, and assurance that private development will not transfer its costs and risks to residents.

The fundamental principle should be simple: establish the

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Data Center Moratoriums, cont.

protections first, and issue permits afterward.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Civic Federation urges the Council to enact Bill 24-26 and ensure that the moratorium applies to pending as well as future data-center proposals.

Thank you for your consideration. ■

MCCF 2026 Election Results Announced

At the Annual Awards Dinner, the 2026 MCCF Officer Elections results were announced.

■ **President**—*Linda Nemeč*, Forest Grove Citizens Association

■ **1st Vice President**—*Cheryl Gannon*, Woodside Civic Association

■ **2nd Vice President**—*Elizabeth Joyce*, Saratoga Village Neighbors

■ **Secretary**—*Alan Bowser*, Park Hills Civic Association

■ **Treasurer**—*Jerry Garson*, Regency Estates Citizens Association ■

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 Linda Nemeč at *president at montgomerycivic dot org*. Include topics/possible dates.

MCCF Annual Awards Program #975 Minutes, Sunday, June 7, 2026, Wheaton, Md.

By Alan Bowser, Recording Secretary

1. President Cheryl Gannon welcomed guests to the Annual Awards Dinner of the Civic Federation. She noted the attendance of former Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett; current County Executive Marc Elrich; Montgomery County Councilmember Will Jawando; Maryland State Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield; and Tom Goldstein (brother of Wayne).

2. Presentation of Awards. The Montgomery County Civic Federation presented the following awards:

- The Star Cup—President Cheryl Gannon;
- The Sentinel Award—Kemp Mill

Civic Association;

■ The Wayne Goldstein Award—The Gasaway Sister of Scotland and the Renters Alliance of Montgomery County;

■ the Legacy of Leadership Award—Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich.

Awardees received citations from the Montgomery County Council, the Maryland General Assembly and the Office of the Montgomery County Executive.



3. Announcement of 2026 Elections Results. President Gannon announced the results of the MCCF Officer Elections for the 2026-2027 membership year: President Linda Nemeč; 1st Vice President Cheryl Gannon; 2nd Vice President Elizabeth Joyce; Secretary Alan Bowser and Treasurer Jerry Garson. ■



MCCF 2026 Annual Awards Program Photos, cont.



MCCF 2026 Annual Awards Program Photos, cont.



MCCF 2026 Annual Awards Program Photos, cont.



MCCF 2026 Annual Awards Program Photos, cont.



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, June 26, 2026

By Alan Bowser, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order. President Linda Nemeč called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Members present: Linda Nemeč, Cheryl Gannon, Alan Bowser, Liz Joyce, Jacquie Bokow, Brenda Freeman, Jay Elvove, Dan Meijer, Joe Harkins.

2. Treasurer's Report. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Treasurer's report was circulated to members. An MCCF bank balance of \$4,377.59 was noted.

3. MCCF Goals & Priorities. Members discuss the Federation's goals and priorities for the 2026-2027 membership year, emphasizing strengthening MCCF's memberships

and relationships, serving as a practical information hub for community associations, focusing advocacy on major County and State issues, and developing MCCF's advocacy tools and legislative agenda.

4. Discussion: Near-Term Action Steps. Members discussed near-term action steps and ways to engage Federation members.

5. Newsletter. The deadline for the July newsletter is June 26, 2026.

6. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m. ■

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The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except August by the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. 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."

Submit contributions for the next issue by the 26th of the current month. Send to CFN at *civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org*.

Send all address corrections to membership AT montgomerycivic.org.

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