



Civic Federation News

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Serving the Public Interest Since 1925

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April Program: Campaign Funds in the 2002 Montgomery County Election Campaigns

By Jim Humphrey, District 1 Vice President

The program for our meeting on Monday, April 11, will focus on financing of the 2002 campaigns of Montgomery County's elected officials. It will be presented by Dan Tuten of "Neighbors for a Better Montgomery". Also known as "NeighborsPAC", this is the grassroots political action committee organized in early 2002. "NeighborsPAC" is funded entirely by individual contributions and run by volunteers from across the county. The organization's mission is "to assure that citizens, not developers or other special interests, control the future of Montgomery County."

As we anticipate the 2006 county elections, it is worth studying how much and how special interests have funded the campaigns of our current elected officials.

(Continued on p 2)

Community Hero Award: the Coalition to " Save Seven Locks School"

by Mark Adelman and Wayne Goldstein

The Federation's Community Hero Award for April will be presented to the coalition to "Save Seven Locks School (SSLS). This group of civic association and MCCPTA members, representing thousands of residents, has worked tirelessly for over a year to inform the public about, and attempt to block, the ill-advised plan of the Montgomery County Board of Education (BoE) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to close Seven Locks Elementary School (SLES) and replace it with a much larger school on the smaller Kendale Road site. Despite repeated rebuffs and rebukes, the group has extensively researched and documented the missteps taken and misinformation promulgated about this plan.

Although county government, BoE, and MCPS officials have characterized this as a purely local matter and have attempted to typecast members of the coalition as NIMBYs, the SSLS coalition has generated countywide interest by showing that the planned closure is part of a broader agenda involving the goal of the Duncan administration and the County Council to grab "unnneeded" MCPS land parcels and use them to increase development in the county under the disingenuous pose of providing more affordable housing. The larger issue has been the subject of investigation and several editorials by the MCCF Education Committee.

We honor the SSLS Coalition for:

- publicizing the link between the decision to scrap a carefully developed plan to modernize and expand SLES and to, instead, build a new school on the Kendale Road site, and emphasizing Superintendent Weast's once-visible but now-hidden proposal to

Inside

Public Safety Committee Meetings	2
(April Program continued)	2
Message from the President	2
Celebrate Rural Montgomery	3
Hearing on Impervious Surface Limits for Rural Areas ...	3
Annapolis Update	4
Board of Education's "Policy FAA"	4
Proposed Bylaws Amendments	6
Council Approved Mixed Use Town Center Zone, Revised	
Olney Master Plan	7
Status of Issues the MCCF Is Following	7
Minutes, Regular Meeting	8
Minutes, Executive Committee Meeting	10
2005 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET	11

- surplus the Seven Locks site in response to Mr. Duncan's request for "unnneeded" MCPS school sites;
- cogently arguing that the proposed Kendale Road site is inadequate and that the true cost of building a new school on that site will exceed the cost of the originally-planned SLES upgrade;
 - exposing the reticence of MCPS staff to provide timely and accurate information to SSLS members, and even to the staff of the State School Superintendent;
 - mounting a vigorous petition drive with 1200 signatures collected to date, showing broad community opposition to closing SLES;
 - attempting to dialogue with BoE and MCPS officials on an alternative approach that would guarantee that SLES be retained by MCPS and used for educational purposes, no matter what happens on the Kendale site; and
 - showing persistence by having numerous meetings with all accessible county and state officials to present them with the facts in this matter and to pressure them to act responsibly to save SLES.

At this point in time, the BoE/MCPS/county government machine remains intent on building a new school on the Kendale Road site and closing Seven Locks. The issue may be drawn out due to budgetary constraints and likely legal action. Whatever the eventual outcome, the members of the SSLS coalition are true "Community Heroes" for waging a sustained battle to alert the public to a seriously flawed policy decision by elected officials and for continuing to fight to keep this flawed decision from damaging the Seven Locks community. Caving in or giving up would allow a bad precedent to be set by allowing county politics rather than the best interests of our children to determine how our public school system is run.

Public Safety Committee Meetings

8:30 PM to 10:00 PM, Red Brick Courthouse Room G06

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Speaker: Tom Carr, Montgomery County Fire Chief

Thursday, May 26, 2005

Speaker: Ray Kight, Montgomery County Sheriff

(April Program continued)

Dan Tuten, who volunteers as webmaster and one of the researchers for NeighborsPAC, will give a prepared talk accompanied by overhead projections that he has given to other civic groups in this county. The slides come from information available on the group's website, www.NeighborsPAC.org. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session with Mr. Tuten.

In his talk, Mr. Tuten asserts that when a special interest group contributes a majority of the funding to the campaigns of elected officials--as is the case with the development industry in our county--that group can exert significant influence across a wide range of public policy areas. Effects can be felt on issues such as affordable housing, zoning standards, taxes, and special legislation to enable or benefit specific building projects.

"Neighbors for a Better Montgomery" was presented with the 2003 Sentinel Award "for contributions to the community and to good government" in June, 2003. In February, 2004, Dan Tuten received the Community Hero Award from MCCF for his dedication to civic activism and, in particular, for his work with NeighborsPAC in analyzing proposed changes to the county's growth policy.

The program will begin shortly after the 7:45 p.m. meeting start time and will take place in the first floor auditorium of the County Council Building (see back page) in Rockville. The public is invited to attend and participate.

Message from the President

By Dan Wilhelm

The Executive's Proposed Operating Budget is available* and the Council will be holding budget hearings on April 5, 6, 7, and 11. I plan to testify for the MCCF and will be emphasizing the need for the County to adequately fund the maintenance of its current infrastructure. While we feel that there are a great many

needs, especially in brick and mortar classrooms and transportation, we also believe that the County must take care of what it has already built.

Since information is lacking about the state of the county's infrastructure, Councilmember Praisner has been leading a task force of facilities managers from the largest county agencies to begin to develop such information. A public meeting was held on March 19 to report on the information collected so far. The data presented shows that funding for infrastructure maintenance ranges from 7% to 57% of the need. The shortfall in dollars exceeds \$60M for only the four largest agencies reporting what they know at this time. These needs include heating and air conditioning systems that have a 25 year life, plumbing that has a 30 year life, ball fields that need reconstruction every 10 years, play ground equipment (20 year life), traffic signals (25 year life), and the list goes on and on. Most of these systems or items last 20 to 30 years and a few extend to 50 years, but some last 10 years or even less.

The maintenance items were assigned to one of five criticality categories that range from "human life and safety" to "primarily aesthetics". Most items were in the more critical categories. Many of us would consider "aesthetic" categories important as well since they include paved play areas, parking and driveway pavement.

Maintenance can be deferred for a short period of time before the cost to repair or replace increases substantially. Deferring maintenance on items such as heating and air conditioning costs the County more in utility expenses since malfunctioning units are very inefficient, and older units cost more to run than newer models. Failure to keep the County attractive subconsciously affects how all of us view other things. I expect that County employees are less motivated, citizens believe the County is run poorly, and all of us are less likely to care about how our property looks or care as much about our community when public property and facilities are allowed to deteriorate.

For all these reasons, we are encouraging the Council to fully fund maintenance of the infrastructure. We realize

the backlog will take a number of years to fully address, but now is the time to get started.

*Editor's note. There are two links on the County's web site www.montgomerycountymd.gov/. The one under the picture goes to the news release which is a several page summary. The sixth in the list to left titled "Duncan Unveils Budget; Cuts Taxes", takes you to a web site where individual sections of the budget are available. If I can find this information, anyone can!

Celebrate Rural Montgomery

2005 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Agricultural Reserve, the rural crescent of more than 90,000 acres crowning the northwestern third of the county. A large network of regional civic groups and businesses are planning a year-long celebration, with events held throughout the county.

The inaugural "Celebrate Rural Montgomery" event is a family open house on Saturday, April 16th, 1:00-4:00, at Poplar Spring Animal Sanctuary south of Poolesville. For more information go to www.ruralmontgomery.org.

April 13 Public Hearing on Impervious Surface Limits for Rural Areas

By Jim Humphrey, District 1 V.P. & Housing Committee

A meeting will be held the evening of April 13 to discuss and hear public testimony on limiting the amount of impervious surface allowed in the county's rural areas. The Private Institutional Facilities (PIF) policy adopted in the 1990s allows the County Council to approve sewer requests made by churches, private

schools, and other large institutional uses that wish to build in areas outside the sewer envelope. These areas contain properties zoned in the RDT, RE-1, RE-2, Rural, and RC large-lot categories. Allowing these kinds of development will have a detrimental effect on the environment because they will introduce large amounts of impervious surface into the previously protected Agricultural Reserve.

At the request of the Council's Transportation and Environment Committee, the Planning Board prepared a zoning text amendment to cap impervious surfaces in the large-lot zones. ZTA 04-27 was introduced in Council on December 14, 2004. Subsequently, some interest groups expressed concerns about the proposed limits, and the T & E Committee established a Working Group to review the issues and make recommendations. As part of this review process, the Group will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 13, at 7:30 p.m. in the 3rd floor conference room of the County Council Building in Rockville. For additional information, or to sign up to testify, call Council staffer Keith Levchenko at 240-777-7944, or e-mail comments to keith.levchenko@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Annapolis Update

By Dale A. Tibbitts, District 5 V.P & Electoral Reforms Chair

Good news! The bills to introduce a state constitutional amendment to allow counties to increase the signature requirement for a charter amendment petition from 10,000 to between 5% and 20% of registered voters have been withdrawn by Senator Ruben (SB 561) and Delegate Barkley (HB 648). Montgomery County now has nearly 520,000 registered voters. If these bills had passed, the minimum requirement in Montgomery County would have been for 26,000 signatures. The bad news: unless we can convince our state legislators to protect our current rights, watch out for these bills to show up again next year

The good news: the House of Delegates passed HB 566 to close the multiple corporation, multiple contribution loophole. All Montgomery County delegates voted for

it on the Third Reading 83-53-3 with 3 absent. The bad news: unfortunately, as of 3/27, the Senate EHEA Committee has not yet scheduled a vote on SB 461, the companion bill to HB 566. A committee vote is solely at the discretion of the chairperson, in this case Senator Paula Hollinger. So, please send a short, positive email to paula_colodny_hollinger@senate.state.md.us requesting a vote on SB 461 as soon as possible and an equally positive, assertive note to Senate President Mike Miller at Thomas_V_Mike_Miller@senate.state.md.us urging him also to support this bill.

The sad news: neither of the legislative committees, Senate EHEA or House Ways & Means, have voted on the public financing of general assembly campaigns bills, SB 725 and HB 1031. MCCF voted this the most important campaign finance reform we would like to see enacted. So, once again I ask you to lobby your state legislators to move on these bills before the session ends for the year.

To check the status of these bills or any other activity in the General Assembly, go to <http://mlis.state.md.us>

Board of Education's "Policy FAA": Problem of Perception?

by Mark R. Adelman, Chair, MCCF Education Committee

This is yet another story about differing perceptions related to public education policy in our County. It highlights the need for MCCF to work toward a "reality" that serves everyone. The Montgomery County Board of Education (BoE) has proposed a revision to its "Policy FAA" the document covering Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning. The announcement of this change is on the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website.¹

¹ Go to <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/index.cfm> and click on "[Facility planning policy](#)" You can access the current policy at: <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/policy/pdf/faa.pdf>.

This proposed revision has, unfortunately, generated a lot of controversy, largely because many people do not trust the BoE or the upper level administration of MCPS. The BoE announcement about the revised Policy FAA implies that critical elements of the old policy statement are "regulatory", do not belong in a policy document and will be shifted to a regulatory document. This of course leads to an argument about the differences between "policy" and "regulation" used to implement policy. The critical element in this particular instance is that Policy FAA is, in fact, a carefully crafted mixture of policy and regulation. As a policy statement, it "guarantees" the community a place at the table in all considerations related to "long-range educational facilities planning". Whether an abbreviated policy statement and a set of regulations (in the development of which the public has little role) will continue to guarantee this critical community involvement is not at all clear. On the one hand, many civic activists and Montgomery County Council of Parent and Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) members believe that the revised Policy is designed to reduce public and community input (increasingly negative of late) into BoE/MCPS decisions about school construction, MCPS land use, etc. On the other hand, MCPS staff say that there has been an ongoing program, for several years now, involving systematic revision of BoE policy papers, many of which are very old and much in need of updating. They assert that the proposal of this revised version of Policy FAA is simply a part of that ongoing program; the policy, it is argued, states that community involvement is important.

Believing it was essential that this issue be aired publicly, the MCCF Education Committee proposed "emergency action" at the March 14 regular meeting. After appropriate discussion, the delegates approved the following (revised) motion:

"Whereas the Montgomery County Board of Education (BoE) has proposed an extensive revision of Policy FAA (Long-Range Educational Facilities Planning), and Whereas the revised FAA appears to differ significantly from the current version of the FAA, and Whereas the BoE has indicated that public comments on the proposed revision must be received by May 9, 2005,

and

Whereas numerous delegates to the Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF) have expressed concerns about the reasons for revision of the FAA, and Whereas the MCCF Education Committee believes that more time is needed for public evaluation of, and comment on, the proposed revised FAA,

Therefore be it

RESOLVED that MCCF requests the BoE to delay action on the proposed revised FAA for at least three months, during which time the BoE can provide public commentary regarding the reasons for revising the FAA, and hold several hearings on the matter.

And be it also

RESOLVED that the MCCF invites the President of the BoE to meet with the delegates to MCCF in the format of a "standard" MCCF pro/con discussion, with, for example, a representative of the MCCPTA, so that the various Montgomery County Civic Associations with interest in this matter can become better informed as to the reasons for, and ramifications of, the proposed revised FAA."

Since our March 14 vote, the press has picked up on this issue² and the MCCPTA Executive Board has sent the BoE a long and very thoughtful letter reviewing the history of creation of Policy FAA, explaining why the proposed revision is problematic, and asking the BoE to "reconsider your proposed action on Policy FAA" and "defer formal consideration of any changes to Policy FAA until the fall of 2005" to "allow all stakeholders adequate time to consider the need for changes and alternative approaches and for public hearings and testimony to occur."

Pending response of the BoE to our (MCCF) resolutions, the Education Committee is attempting to arrange some informal discussions with the BoE and its staff, in the hope that progress can be made in crafting a version of Policy FAA that is a reasonable compromise between the extensive (older) version that the BoE seeks to refine and the overly condensed (newer) version that has been put forward. If this can be achieved - in the

² <http://www.potomacalmanac.com/printarticle.asp?article=47656>.

course of a real public dialogue - then the two different perceptions may just possibly become a shared reality, to the benefit of all parties in this controversial issue.

Proposed Bylaws Amendments

by Peggy Dennis, Bylaws Committee Chair

The following changes to the Bylaws were proposed at the March meeting and will be voted on by Delegates at the April 11 Regular Meeting. Proposed changes to Articles IV, VII and VIII have to do with the abolition of the elective position of Corresponding Secretary and the transfer of the few remaining duties to the Public Relations Officer.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATION

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

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

ARTICLE VII. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

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

1. President
2. First Vice President
3. Second Vice President
4. Eight District Vice Presidents

5. Recording Secretary
6. Treasurer

ARTICLE VIII. DUTIES OF APPOINTED OFFICIALS

4. *Public Relations Officer.* The Public Relations Officer shall **maintain and update the Federation's website.** He shall receive, edit, and transmit news releases to the general public when so directed by the Federation. He shall maintain an active, up-to-date file and a rapport with the press, members of the Federation, elected officials and others, in all matters dealing with Federation business. He shall promote, to the greatest extent possible, the goals and achievements of the Federation which shall be discussed with the Executive Committee from time-to-time as needs may dictate.

The proposed amendments to Articles II and IX pertain to membership, voting rights and responsibilities of committee members and chairs:

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

3. Individual Member

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

ARTICLE IX. DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. *General.* **Committee members must be members of the Federation.** It shall be the general duty of each Standing Committee to monitor, evaluate, and report on the status and activity of matters within its assigned purview. In situations in which an issue impacts more than one Standing Committee, the Executive Committee

shall assign and coordinate Committee tasks. Committee reports and recommendations shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval and any further action. Committees shall represent and carry out established positions of the Federation which impact their area of responsibility, such actions to include participation in work sessions, hearings, and panels.

Council Approved Mixed Use Town Center Zone, Revised Olney Master Plan By Jim Humphrey, District 1 V.P. & Housing Committee

On March 15, by an 8-0 vote with Mr. Perez absent, the County Council approved ZTA 04-26 to create a new Mixed-Use Town Center (MXTC) Zone. Some changes were made to zone standards in the version reported by the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee and approved by Council.

As recommended in MCCF's testimony on the ZTA, the building height limits are now expressed in feet rather than in number of stories (42 feet for Standard Method development, 70 feet for Optional Method), and the amount of required public use space was doubled or more for purely residential projects (10% for all lots under 40,000 square feet and for Standard Method on larger lots, and 20% for Optional Method on larger lots). The new zone allows public use space to be provided in another location than the lot for which it is a requirement, and states that public use space can be interior space.

The Council did not adopt the MCCF suggestion to limit the height of any MXTC building adjacent to residential land use to 42 feet. They broke with the long-standing countywide policy of limiting transition height to residential areas to 3 stories (35 to 42 feet in height), instead allowing up to the zone maximum of 70 feet unless limited in a master plan. The Planning Board is also authorized to limit the height of MXTC building, based on compatibility with adjacent residential use. In addition, the Council approved an

increase in residential density for Optional Method from 15 to 20 dwelling units per acre, and a limit of 40,000 square feet on size of retail to prevent regional retail operations from locating in rural Town Centers.

The revised Olney Master Plan, also approved by Council on March 15, is the first plan in which MXTC zoning is recommended. That plan limits MXTC buildings to a 70 foot height in the core of the new Olney Town Center, and to between 42 and 56 feet in height on the edges adjacent to residential areas. After the citizen input phase of the revision process, the Planning Board added additional housing density to the southeast quadrant of the Olney Master Plan area. The Council then added still more housing density to the master plan by recommending the new MXTC zone for the 90 acre Town Center area.

As MCCF stated in our testimony to Council on the ZTA creating the MXTC Zone, "the implementation of such flexible zoning should be undertaken as an exhaustive process of partnership with the existing community, with the (Planning) Board actively seeking input from the citizens on all aspects." We trust this will be the case in Olney, as well as in other rural areas where Town Centers will be established using the MXTC Zone. The zone may also be used to replace existing Transit Station Mixed Use and Residential zoning in certain cases. The next use of the new zone will come during revision of the Damascus Master Plan, where proposals have already been heard by the Planning Board to add up to 1,500 new dwelling units to the Town Center area.

Status of Issues the MCCF Is Following

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- Board of Education proposed revision of Policy FAA (see article, page 4)
 - March 8 BoE approved Superintendent's proposal to build new school on Kendale Rd. site rather than modernize Seven Locks E.S. (see article on page 1); MCCF is on record opposing the sale or disposal of MCPS school sites.
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HOUSING COMMITTEE

- ZTA 04-10, (MCCF opposes) changes regulations on accessory apartments. Council vote pending.
- Closing Cost Assistance Program, Council adopted a resolution March 22 to approve a financial management plan for a Revolving Fund for this Program
- Bill 36-04, Discrimination in Housing amendments, Council HHS Committee worksession April 4 at 2 p.m.
- Workforce Housing, Executive branch planning effort to create subsidized housing program for households above moderate income level, legislation not yet introduced.
- ZTA 05-04/SRA 05-01, to change membership of panel to approve MPDU alternative agreements, Council hearing on April 26 at 11 a.m.

PLANNING AND LAND USE COMMITTEE

- ZTA 03-27, Building Height Measurement, Council PHED Committee worksession April 11 at 9:15 a.m.
- ZTA 04-16, (MCCF opposes) will permanently eliminate traffic test for rezoning of property in Metro Station areas, Council vote postponed from March 22 to April 5.
- ZTA 05-02, to create new Transit Oriented Mixed Use Zone, PHED Committee action pending.
- County Facility at Shady Grove, Executive branch and developers meeting to relocate components to Germantown, Shady Grove and Gaithersburg Vicinity master plan areas.
- Shady Grove Sector Plan revision, Council PHED Committee worksession on April 5 at 2 p.m.
- Master Plans under revision, not yet approved, for--Shady Grove, Damascus, Germantown, Gaithersburg Vicinity, Twinbrook, and Bethesda CBD.

PUBLIC FINANCE AND UTILITIES

- County FY06 Capital and Operating Budgets and Amendments to FY05-10 Capital Improvements Program, Council hearings on April 5, 6, and 7 at 7 p.m., and on April 6 at 1:30 p.m.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Bill 32-04, (MCCF opposes) Ambulance Transport Fee, Council vote pending.
- Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan, Council PS Committee worksession on April 4 at 9:30 a.m.

Minutes of the March 14, 2005 Regular Meeting

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

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

Announcements. Dick Strombotne: Tax relief bills in Maryland; places flyers on desk. Jim Humphrey, 2nd Annual County-Wide Community Preservation Conference, April 9 in Washington Grove.

Agenda. Jim Humphrey: Historic Preservation, Land Use resolution. Mark Adelman: will introduce emergency resolution on education. Adopted.

Quorum call. 12 member associations are present at 7:55 pm.

Minutes from the February 14, 2005 meeting are adopted.

Treasurer's Report. Luella Mast has reports on table.

Committee Reports.

Housing. Jim Humphrey: an affordable housing proposition is on the County Council's agenda. Awards Committee: Charles Wolff's committee will meet this week. Send suggestions to him.

Program. FY 2006 County Operating Budget. Chuck Lapinski presides. Guests: Joe Beach, OMB; Councilmembers Marilyn Praisner and Tom Perez; Derek Berlage, Chairman, M-NC/PPC.

Ms. Praisner. Council has not seen the Budget, either. Council is concerned about the rise in real estate assessments. May reduce the tax rate. Concerned about State and Federal reductions in transportation funding and about school construction money from the State. Slots issue may affect this. Thornton Commission recommendations have not been fully funded. President Bush has ended Community Development Vouchers. Council is uncomfortable with the budget process. Spends too much time on the little stuff. Impact tax revenue: assumed \$24M, but only realized \$1.5M, as

developers filed early to avoid the tax. Can't spend Clarksburg money anywhere but in Clarksburg. School construction costs are rising. Energy tax may increase. Council will hold a forum on infrastructure this Saturday: trees, street maintenance, etc.

Derek Berlage. Budget process misses the substantive issues. Over 50% goes to education. 20% goes to public safety. 1 cent increase in property tax to restore park funding. Insurance premiums are rising. (Park employees are "traditionally" paid less than their County Government counterparts). Pension cost increases. 1700 acres have been added to the Park system. More visitors to the park system than ever. 124 major maintenance projects that should have been completed by now are not. We have a nationally acclaimed Park System, but it does not meet national park standards.

Joe Beach. Distributes handouts, putting the budget in historical perspective. Budget is about \$3.5 billion. Over 10 years, taxes have not increased more than inflation.

Council President Tom Perez: Process issues. Agrees that a better job must be done vis-à-vis transparency. Two new employees to be hired to look at Legislative oversight. Improve the County's website. Satisfied with MCPS. Portables are the result of a policy decisions. President Bush proposes a 42% reduction in adult education, and localities are left "holding the bag."

Chuck Lapinski. Questions employee compensation. Joe Beach: County has to be competitive with other governments and the federal government to recruit and retain talent. Must honor collective bargaining with its unions. Q & A follows.

Bylaws changes. Peggy Dennis. Bylaw changes are printed on pages 6, and 7 of the March, 2005 Newsletter. These involve changes in vice-presidential structure, and duties of vice presidents. Vice presidential changes are approved with one nay and one abstention. Next, the \$100 maximum expenditure is changed to five percent of the current budget; Audit Committee is replaced by an auditor. Motion passes unanimously. Additional bylaws amendments are proposed concerning Membership, Corresponding Secretary, Public Relations Officer, and Standing Committee membership. Charles Wolff moves

an amendment that the words "Committee members must be member of the Federation" be deleted. Seconded. Some feel MCCF membership is an unnecessary burden to volunteers; others feel that any volunteer can contribute to a committee, but that only MCCF members should vote in committee. Motion fails 9-10-1. Motion to vote on amendments at April meeting passes unanimously.

Education. Mark Adelman. Moves that the MCCF request the BoE to delay action on the proposed revised FAA for at least three months to provide additional time for citizen input. Also, Mark proposes that the MCCF invite the president of the BoE to meet with the delegates of MCCF in the format of a "standard" MCCF discussion with a MCCPTA representative so that the various parties with interest in this matter can become better informed as to the reasons for the proposed revised FAA. Seconded. Motion passes, 11-4-4.

Land Use. Jim Humphrey. Moves that the MCCF support bill 38-04 prohibiting the sale by the County of any development rights (TDRs) including those that the government currently owns. Passes with one abstention.

Wayne Goldstein. Offers motion that the MCCF support the historic designation of the Falkland Apartments. Passes with one nay, three abstentions.

Recording Secretary must leave as meeting is adjourning.

Minutes of the March 24, 2005 Executive Committee Meeting

by Richard Zierdt, Recording Secretary

MCCF President Dan Wilhelm calls the meeting to order at 7:50 pm. Eleven in attendance including Wilhelm, Zierdt, Schofield, Dennis, Adelman, Schiff, Lamari, Gordon, Sauer, Wolff, Kauffunger. Minutes from Feb 24, 2004 meeting approved.

Treasurer's Reports. Luella Mast distributes reports. Accepted. Bank balance is \$8,389.23 as of Feb 28, 2005. Idea of starting a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational counterpart to the MCCF is discussed.

Community Hero Award. Mark Adelman suggests the Save Seven Locks Elementary School organization. Agreement is unanimous

Program. For April Dan Tuten from Neighbors for a Better Montgomery will present program on campaign financing. Discussion on future program topics: Stan Schiff suggests a program about how/when successful projects are negotiated between developers and surrounding community and parlaying that into issue of growth. Discussion begins about the relative success/failures/meaning/strategies of development/community relations. The idea is not to villainize developers, but encourage discussion and negotiation. Luella suggests a September program on the planning process. Cary suggests a program on the ICC for May. George suggests the State legislative session. Mark suggests the MCPS proposed changes to its FAA policy. Luella moves that State legislators be invited for May, which is accepted.

Awards Committee. Charles Wolff (committee: Cary Lamari, Arnie Gordon, Jim Snee). The Committee submits nominations for the Star Cup, Peggy Dennis; Gazette Award, Olney Boys and Girls Community Sports Association; Sentinel Award, Dale Tibbitts.

Awards Banquet on Friday, May 6. \$20/person, \$35 couple. Officers are urged to publicize the event.

Web site. Lyle Schofield. Will post all past presidents and annual award recipients since 1925. Jim urges that committees get their proceedings/issues on the web site.

Housing. Jim Humphrey. TOMX (Transit-Oriented Mixed Use) zone was approved. Height definitions were accepted, 70 feet maximum. ZTA 04-16 was approved, permanently eliminating traffic tests in transit metro station areas. Luella: May 2, 2005 is the date of the affordable housing seminar. Wayne Goldstein will attend.

Education. Mark Adelman. MCPS has proposed changes to Policy FAA basically gutting its substance, removing many opportunities for public review and comment. MCCF and MCCPTA oppose changes to FAA. Maryland Parents Advisory Council to hear if local

residents are satisfied with their educational experience on 4/4.

Environmental. Wayne Goldstein. Wayne has joined the Bi-County Citizens Advisory Committee of the WSSC. Wayne discusses the upcoming new 96" water pipe to better serve Prince Georges County. Cut-and-Cover vs. tunneling was discussed.

Legislation. George Sauer. The bill to increase the number of signatures to get a question on the ballot was withdrawn.

Planning and Land Use. Jim Humphrey: Private Institutional Facilities (PIFs) in RDT and Rural Estate Zones. Hearing on April 13 at 7:30 PM. Call Keith Levchecko 240-777-7944 to sign up. Apparently, civic groups were not well notified.

Nominating Committee. Dick Kauffinger: Committee has considered many nominees. All are urged to make suggestions to Dick.

Public Safety and Utilities. Dan Wilhelm. County is behind in infrastructure maintenance. MCCF will testify for the hearing on infrastructure. Luella moves that safety equipment be included in Dan's testimony. Seconded. Passes.

Transportation. Dan has been voicing the MCCF's position on the GARVEE funds.

Meeting adjourned 10:20 PM

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

2005 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Honorees:

The Star Cup: Peggy Dennis

The Gazette Award: Olney Boys and Girls Community Sports Association

The Sentinel Award: Dale A. Tibbitts

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

New Fortune Restaurant

16515 S. Frederick Avenue, Gaithersburg

\$20 per person

\$35 per couple

Please RSVP by Tuesday, May 3

Directions: New Fortune is in the Walnut Hill Shopping Center, on Route 355 one block northwest of the intersection with Shady Grove Road & I370.

Menu: Dumplings, Roast Chicken, Beef Chow Foon, Chinese Broccoli with Oyster Sauce, Fried Tofu with Vegetables, Twice-cooked Pork, Singapore Noodles, Fried Rice, Steamed Fish Cantonese Style, Orange Wedges, wine and sodas. Cash bar.

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

I/We will attend the banquet _____

Name & organization (if appropriate)

Name of guest

Telephone or email address

Federation Meeting

Monday, April 11, 2005
7:45 3rd Floor Auditorium
County Council Office Building.
Rockville, MD

Agenda

7:45 Call to Order
7:47 Introduction and Announcements
7:55 Adoption of Business Meeting Agenda
7:58 Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report
8:00 Program: 2002 Election Campaign Finances
9:15 Committee Reports
9:20 Vote on Proposed bylaws amendments
9:30 Member Issues
9:40 Old Business
9:45 New Business
10:00 Adjourn

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

The **Civic Federation News** is published monthly. It is mailed to Delegates; associate members; news media, and local, state, and federal officials. Permission is granted to reprint any article provided proper credit is given to the "**Civic Federation News of the Montgomery County Civic Federation.**"

Submit contributions for the next issue by: **Midnight, Sunday April 24.** Prepare submission as an MS Word, Word Perfect or text-only document, **attach** it to e-mail, and send it to hotyakker@comcast.net
Please send all address corrections to Dan Wilhelm, 904 Cannon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-384-2698, or djwilhelm@erols.com.

NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, April 21, 2005, 7:45 p.m.

RED BRICK COURTHOUSE

29 Courthouse Square, Rockville

(Note: there is free parking in front of the courthouse.)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION

DAN WILHELM, DATABASE MANAGER

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