

Planning and Land Use Committee Report/Proposed Resolutions

| Harriet Quinn reports on transportation and school impact taxes, plus modifications to accessory apartment procedures | [MORE](#)

Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget

| Budgeted and actual as of June 30, 2015, plus next years proposed budget | [MORE](#)

President's Column: Welcome Back!

| The Executive Committee has not been idle during the summer, says Paula Bienenfeld | [MORE](#)

Bicycling as an Alternative Transportation Mode

| Peggy Dennis reports on the C&O Canal Bike Loaner Program and the WABA | [MORE](#)

Deer Hunting—Be Part of the Solution

| Peggy Dennis covers the need to reduce the deer population in the county | [MORE](#)

Youth Monthly Bus Passes are Now on Sale

| The monthly pass, available to those 18 years old and younger, allows unlimited rides | [MORE](#)

County Executive Leggett's 'Library of the Future' Summit

| You are urged to participate on Thursday, September 24 | [MORE](#)

of note

Next MCFF Meeting Changed

21 September 2015, 7:45 p.m. @ the County Council Office Building in Rockville. "How Much More in Taxes Would You Be Willing to Pay to Take a Bus?" [AGENDA](#) • [PROGRAM](#)

September's Community Hero

It's Max Bronstein, of Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Assn. [READ PROFILE](#)

Meeting Minutes

June Meeting [SEE MINUTES](#)
Executive Committee Meetings During Summer [JUNE](#) • [JULY](#) • [AUGUST](#)

Membership Application

Join or Renew Now [SEE FORM](#)

Federation Meeting 868

Monday, September 21, 2015

7:45 p.m. • 1st Floor Auditorium
County Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland

AGENDA

- 7:45 Call to Order/Introductions
- 7:50 Approval of Agenda
- 7:51 Announcements
- 7:55 Approval of Minutes, June 8 meeting
- 7:56 Treasurer's Report
- 7:57 Community Hero:
Max Bronstein
- 8:00 Program: Proposed
Independent Transit Authority
- 9:15 Vote on Resolutions from PLU
- 9:20 Vote on Proposed Budget
- 9:25 Committee Reports
- 9:40 Old and New Business
- 9:45 Adjournment

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Mark your calendars now for the remaining 2015 MCCF meetings.

With the exception of September, when—due to the Rosh Hashanah holiday—our monthly meeting will be on the third Monday, and July and August when we take a vacation, monthly meetings are on *the second Monday of the month*.

Please mark these dates on your calendars, and plan to attend:

- **SEPTEMBER 21**
- **OCTOBER 12**
- **NOVEMBER 9**
- **DECEMBER 14**

Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.

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mccf

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.

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."

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September Program: How Much More in Taxes Would You Be Willing to Pay to Take a Bus?

By Jim Zepp and Jerry Garson

The MCCF's Program on Monday, September 21, will be an update on the County government's efforts to impose higher taxes on residents and businesses by creating an Independent Transit Authority (ITA). The County Transit Task Force released a draft report on August 30 recommending changes to the County Executive in his bill previously submitted to the State Legislature that would create the ITA. Because the ITA could add billions to the tax burden of County taxpayers, this is a significant issue affecting our communities for decades into the future.

MCCF First Vice President Jim Zepp and Jerry Garson, MCCF Transportation Chair, will discuss the potential impact of increased property and other taxes being

recommended by the County Executive's Transit Task Force as well as other planning and transportation alternatives. (If you did not attend, view the videos of the MCCF April 2015 program on transportation futures for more information on this subject on the [MCCF website](#).)

To address current and future transportation concerns, the County is currently pursuing a large number of transportation/transit projects (the Purple Line light rail, the Corridor Cities Transitway or CCT, and 10 Bus Rapid Transit or BRT routes) as well as a new six-mile highway (the M83) that will each cost billions of additional tax dollars to construct, maintain, and operate. Competing with these new projects for funding are existing roads and bridges that need repairs and replacement as well

as the regional WMATA subway and bus services and the County's Ride On local bus service.

Furthermore, there are other community needs such as schools, public safety, health care, affordable housing, libraries and cultural facilities, and parks and recreation to consider in terms of what County taxpayers are expected to fund through the many types of taxes paid to live and work here. The County is at its maximum limits for income and property taxes, a situation which County Finance Director Joe Beach described as being "under pressure" in terms of increasing expenditures and looking for new revenue sources to maintain current obligations.

The County's approved operating budget for Fiscal Year 2016 (which

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September Program, cont.

started on July 1, 2015) was \$5.08 billion. As a point of comparison, the State of Delaware's FY2016 recommended operating budget is only \$3.9 billion.

Because of an expected revenue shortfall, the County government has already reduced this current budget by \$54 million. It is projected that this situation will continue for at least the next two years with the County's revenue falling by more than \$150 million in FY15-17 and \$250 million in FY15-18. Consequently, the County Executive has already begun warning that there will be a substantial future increase in property taxes just to maintain the County's current level of spending.

How this affects individual County households is illustrated in the chart at right.

The taxes included in the chart are County income, property, transfer, recordation, and excise taxes (fuel-energy, telephone, and admissions). The hotel tax is excluded. State and municipal taxes are not included. Household burden in the chart are the total taxes referenced above divided by the number of households. Real burden is Household burden adjusted for inflation (CPI) with the base year as 1999.

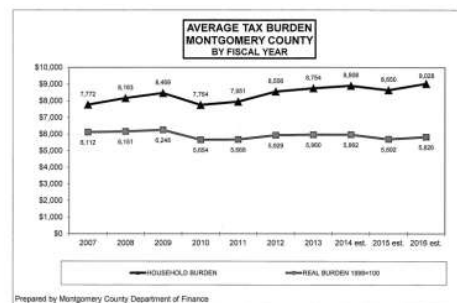
The Tax Foundation prepares annual comparisons of the relative

tax burdens for each of the states. In its most recent report, Maryland is considered to have the 40th worst business tax climate. However among the different types of taxes included in this analysis, the two main categories driving this ranking are personal income taxes (46th worst) and property taxes (41st worst). The Foundation estimates that the current combined state and local tax burden for Maryland residents is the 7th highest in the country.

THE ITA

Since both Federal and state funding for transportation and other public facilities and services are also being constrained, the County is challenged to find funding for all of the new transit projects that it wants to build. Consequently the County Executive requested new state legis-

[MORE](#)



September Program, cont.

lation (MC-24-15) last January that would allow the County to create an Independent Transit Authority (ITA). Concerns about this new agency were discussed in articles by Cary Lamari in the [March 2015 newsletter](#) and by Jerry Garson in the [April 2015 newsletter](#).

A public hearing for the ITA bill was scheduled by the County's State Legislative Delegation one week after its introduction on the following Friday. Due to requests by citizens, the hearing was moved from Annapolis to Rockville and rescheduled from Friday afternoon to Friday evening. Despite this short notice, the Council's auditorium was filled to standing room only as citizens and union members turned out to protest the bill's provisions. It became apparent that this proposal had been

introduced without any input by the County Council, the union, or the public.

Consequently, the County Executive responded to this outpouring of opposition by withdrawing the bill for that Legislative Session. However, he also declared his intention to submit the ITA bill in next year's Session if there are no other alternatives identified for funding the planned BRT routes.

THE TRANSIT TASK FORCE

To this end, on April 6th the County Executive reactivated his Transit Task Force to make recommendations on how to set up a separate independent agency to finance, build, operate, and maintain a proposed 100-mile BRT transit system and on how to finance the construction and operating costs for the proposed system.

Several new members, including Jim Zepp, were added to the revived Task Force to slightly broaden its representation beyond various public officials and advocates for the BRT. Its purpose is to consider changes to the previously proposed ITA legislation that would improve its chances of passage, study other funding alternatives for the planned BRT routes, and provide some opportunities for public input on the proposed ITA and BRT funding. The Task Force or its two working groups met almost weekly with the goal of producing a final report to the County Executive by October 8, 2015.

Jerry Garson, MCCF's Transportation Committee Chair and a CPA, has calculated the likely impact on individual property tax bills for building the various BRT routes us-

[MORE](#)

September Program, cont.

ing the cost estimates for these projects submitted to the Council for the Countywide Transitway Functional Master Plan. (See table below.)

In an effort to reduce the figures for the three initial BRT routes from

\$1.8 billion to \$1.6 billion, a subsequent cost estimate was prepared for the Transit Task Force which relies on measures such as cutting the number of BRT vehicles from 153 to 88 and shortening the Rockville Pike route by eliminating the section between Friendship Heights and the

Bethesda Metro station. However, the reduced cost estimate is characterized as Phase 1 with no additional phases being specified at this time. The intention remains to eventually build all 10 BRT routes.

Since it is likely that the CCT will be included in the ITA's funding ac-

Potential Commutative Impact of BRT Projects on Real Property Taxes

Proposed BRT Project	Estimated (Pre-Engineering) Capital Construction Costs (billions) (Cumulative)	Estimated Cost of Financing with Revenue Bonds	Total Estimated (Pre-Engineering) Capital Construction Cost (Cumulative)	Estimated Annual Cost to Real Property Tax Payers	% Annual Increase in Property Tax
Route 355/Rockville Pike, Veirs Mill Rd., Route 29/Colesville Rd.	\$1.6 bn	\$1.15 bn	\$2.75 bn	\$234 mil	15%
Plus Corridor Cities Transitway (Phases 1&2)	\$3.0 bn	\$2.10 bn	\$5.10 bn	\$429 mil	27%
Plus 7 Other Proposed BRT Routes	\$4.7 bn	\$3.40 bn	\$8.10 bn	\$589 mil	37%

■ The above estimates do not include any operating costs for the BRT routes as well as other significant costs related to the BRT construction and ITA's administration and do not include any costs associated with the Purple Line.

■ Research on major public works projects has found that most cost estimates tend to be substantially less than the actual construction costs. "Cost overruns in the order of 50 percent in real terms are common for major infrastructure, and overruns of 100 percent are not uncommon." [From *Survival of the Unfittest: Why the Worst Infrastructure Gets Built.*]

[MORE](#)

September Program, cont.

tivities, the amount that the ITA will need to initially raise should be in the range of \$2 to \$3 billion, which would require a substantial increase in property or any other taxes that would be used as a revenue source. Other factors that could substantially increase these figures include:

- The related operational costs for these projects,

- The estimates are based on the MNCPPC recommended BRT configuration. The County Council changed some of the recommendations, e.g., the 4.5 miles of Colesville Road south of White Oak was switched from the BRTs traveling in mixed traffic which would have cost less to more expensive dedicated lanes.

- The estimates are only for the BRT-related construction costs.

However, when the state “opens” a roadway for construction projects, it is now required to build what is termed “complete streets,” which means that bike lanes and other pedestrian-related improvements must also be included.

- The VHB estimates do not include the cost of signal prioritization equipment that would increase BRT vehicle speeds by giving them preference at signalized intersections and which are considered a necessary part of a BRT system. In 2001, such a project cost \$10 million for **Los Angeles to implement in two corridors.**

The Transit Task Force is cur-

More information about the proposed Independent Transit Authority and BRT financing can be found at the Transit Task Force’s Website.

rently considering modifications to the proposed ITA that may make it more acceptable to citizens and other groups while retaining its ability to impose additional billions in taxes to finance the various transit projects. As well as increasing property taxes, other revenue sources such as Federal or state funding, sales, excise, and payroll taxes are being discussed.

There will be a public meeting which is currently scheduled for **6 p.m., September 30**, in the Council Office Building, 3rd Floor Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, when citizens can express their concerns about these issues. However the Transit Task Force Website should be checked for any changes for this and other meetings. If you want to speak about how much you are willing to pay for all of this, please attend. ■ **NEXT**

Strathmore-Bel Pre’s Max Bronstein Honored as MCCF’s ‘Community Hero’ for September

By Paula Bienenfeld, President

This month we are honored to recognize Max Bronstein, a long-term member of both the Civic Federation and his home organization, the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association, as a Community Hero.

Max began attending Civic Federation meetings in 2001. He told us he found them very educational and informative, and was hooked. He started becoming involved in community issues as his interest grew, working with other Civic Federation members, and the County Council, Planning Board, and County Executive.

Through the years, he has worked with other active members of the Civic Federation on planning and land use issues including the development at the Glenmont Metro Center, and at Indian Spring.

At Glenmont, the proposal was to take what was existing, a few hundred apartments, and rebuild for up to 1,550 apartment units. Max worked on the plan, pointing out the stress on traffic and infrastructure. He also worked to push for construction of his neighborhood Mid-County Recreation Center, which finally opened about three years ago.

Max has also been active in transportation and traffic issues, working on the Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR) test for proposed development. Each of these initiatives takes months and years of meeting attendance, report reading, and letter and email writing. Those of us who work on county issues know just how much it takes to stay involved, speak up, and be persistent. Max did all of these. In addition, he found

time to contribute to the Strathmore-Bel Pre newsletter, *The Bugle*, with his column, “Gleanings from Meetings,” a summary of reports from the many meetings he attends at the county government, and serve on the board of the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association.

Unlike many of us who are transplants to Montgomery County, Max grew up in Washington, D.C., and, as a result, is very familiar with the area and how it has changed. He also has a sense of what is of benefit to our community, and what is not. This institutional knowledge is rare and we are lucky that he contributes to our meetings, providing information and a history from which existing and, of course, new members benefit. Thank you Max for all your involvement and hard work! ■ **MORE**

Planning and Land Use Committee Report and Proposed Resolutions

By Harriet Quinn, Planning and Land Use Co-Chair

BILL 34-15 RESOLUTION

A proposed resolution in support of Bill 34-15 will be discussed and voted on at the MCCF meeting on September 21. The Bill will be discussed by the Council PHED Committee on a future date.

Bill 34-15, Taxes – Transportation and School Impact Tax – Amendments, would revise the development impact taxes that developers are supposed to pay for new development. The taxes are assessed on new residential and commercial buildings and additions to commercial buildings in order to fund the additional transportation and public school systems capacity improvements necessary to accom-

modate the development. These taxes are collected by the Department of Permitting Services before a building permit is issued. Over the years, numerous exemptions and discounts have been created, resulting in insufficient revenue to cover the improvements. Revenue from the Transportation Impact Tax is only 0.9% of all revenue received, while the Transportation Budget represents 25% of the Montgomery County Operating Budget and 19% of the Capital Budget. The School Impact Tax collected represents 3.5% of revenue while the MCPS Budget is over 50% of the Operating Budget and 22% of the Capital Budget.

This Bill would:

- revise the application of the transportation and school impact taxes in a former enterprise zone;

- revise the life of a credit certified after a certain date for transportation and school impact taxes;

- allow a transportation impact tax credit for reconstruction of an existing road;

- eliminate Metro Station Policy Areas and Clarksburg as separate tax districts and incorporate those areas into the Countywide tax; and

- eliminate the separate tax rates within 0.5 miles of certain MARC stations.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Whereas development impact taxes are intended to fund transportation and public school capacity improvements necessary to accommodate additional development, and

Whereas in recent years, due to

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PLU Report, cont.

added exemptions, discounts, and credits, impact tax revenues have not been sufficient to significantly contribute to the cost for infrastructure needed to support the new development,

Be it resolved that the Montgomery County Civic Federation supports Bill 34-15 and efforts to collect sufficient revenues from development in order to fund the necessary infrastructure to support the development.

MODIFICATIONS TO ACCESSORY APARTMENT PROCEDURES

At the MCCF meeting on September 21, we will discuss the Planning Board's recent last minute proposed substantive change to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the ap-

proval process for Accessory Apartments. The proposed modifications are buried within the lengthy **Omnibus ZTA 15-09**, intended for dozens of technical changes. The proposed modifications would eliminate the special exception (conditional use) process for the applications that do not meet the standards for administrative approval and those applications would be processed through the administrative process.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Whereas changes to the process for approval for accessory apartments were thoroughly discussed and deliberated by the Planning Board and County Council in 2013, and

Whereas the County Council was clear in its intent and determined that the applications not meeting the

objective standards for administrative approval could apply for approval through the special exception (conditional use) process, and

Whereas, members of the Planning Board have requested substantive changes to approval procedures without notifying the public and submitted the modifications in an Omnibus ZTA meant for technical corrections,

Be it resolved that the Montgomery County Civic Federation opposes the modifications to the Accessory Apartments Section of the Code contained in ZTA 15-09, requests that the Council delete from ZTA 15-09 all proposed modifications to the accessory apartments process, and requests that any proposed substantive changes to the procedures for accessory apartments be submitted in a separate ZTA.

MORE

PLU Report, cont.

UPCOMING MEETINGS FOR MASTER PLANS IN PROGRESS

Below is a list of upcoming meetings and milestones for area Master Plans in progress with links to the Master Plan's web page. In addition, you can view [pending and recent development project approvals](#).

■ **Rock Spring Office Park Master Plan** (Amendment to North Bethesda/Garrett Park Sector Plan) September 1, 7:00 p.m., Launch Open House, Walter Johnson High School

■ **White Flint 2 Sector Plan:** Held Kickoff Meeting on June 25. September 3, Planning Board Proposed Scope of Work.

■ **Montgomery Village Master Plan:** September 10, 1:45 p.m., Planning Board Tours area, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Planning Board Public Hearing

in Silver Spring.

■ **Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan:** First Planning Board worksession was July 20. Additional worksessions scheduled for Sept. 17, Oct. 5, Oct. 22, Nov. 12.

■ **Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan:** September 22, noon to 6:00 p.m. office hours at Community Center to discuss issues with planners. Working Draft of Plan to be presented to Planning Board October 8.

■ **Westbard Sector Plan:** Planning Board Public Hearing, September 24, 2:30-5:00 p.m. and 6:30–9:00 p.m.

■ **Bicycle Master Plan Kickoff Meetings:** All meetings from 7:00–9:00 p.m.

■ Tuesday, September 8—Meeting 1, Paint Branch High School, 14121 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville.

■ Wednesday, September 9—Meeting 2, Germantown Regional Servic-

es Center, Room A, 12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown.

■ Thursday, September 10—10:00 a.m. Scope of Work presented to Planning Board.

■ Tuesday, September 15—Meeting 3, Planning Department headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring.

■ Monday, September 21—Meeting 4, Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring.

■ Tuesday, October 6—Meeting 5, Walter Johnson High School, 6400 Rock Spring Drive, Bethesda.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES

TEST FOR SCHOOL CAPACITY

Below is the list of the MCPS School Clusters with inadequate School Capacity. This will be part of our discussion for the MCCF October Program on The Development Review Process, Part 2, Changes to

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PLU Report, cont.

the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Tests. ■

Subdivision Staging Policy: Results of School Test for FY2016

Reflects County Council Adopted FY2016 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY2015-2020 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) | Effective July 1, 2015; Updated August 25, 2015

School Test Level	Description	Cluster Outcomes by Level		
		Elementary Inadequate	Middle Inadequate	High Inadequate
<p><u>Clusters over 105% utilization</u></p> <p>School facility payment required in inadequate clusters to proceed.</p>	<p>5-year test</p> <p>Effective July 1, 2015</p> <p>Test year 2020-21</p>	<p>Clarksburg (113.8%)</p> <p>Gaithersburg (109.4%)</p> <p>Northwood (105.5%)</p> <p>Quince Orchard (115.3%)</p>	<p>Blair (117.1%)</p> <p>Damascus (109.3%)</p> <p>Gaithersburg (106.0%)</p> <p>Kennedy (115.6%)</p> <p>Northwood (110.5%)</p> <p>Rockville (109.6%)</p> <p>Wheaton (114.2%)</p> <p>Whitman (111.9%)</p>	<p>Blair (110.0%)</p> <p>Churchill (106.4%)</p> <p>Clarksburg (113.8%)</p> <p>Einstein (113.7%)</p> <p>Walter Johnson (111.3%)</p> <p>Kennedy (107.7%)</p> <p>Richard Montgomery (110.8%)</p> <p>Northwest (113.3%)</p> <p>Northwood (112.6%)</p> <p>Paint Branch (106.1%)</p> <p>Quince Orchard (108.7%)</p> <p>Wheaton (108.8%)</p> <p>Whitman (114.0%)</p>
<p><u>Clusters over 120% utilization**</u></p> <p>Moratorium required in clusters that are inadequate.</p>	<p>5-year test</p> <p>Effective July 1, 2015</p> <p>Test year 2020-21</p>	<p>In addition to placeholder capacity projects, the Clarksburg Cluster high school capacity includes eight classrooms associated with the Seneca Valley HS revitalization/expansion that will be utilized through boundary changes between Clarksburg and Seneca Valley high schools in the future.</p>		

Capacities in clusters include the following placeholder capital projects:

- Ten elementary school classrooms in the Gaithersburg Cluster.
- Six middle school classrooms in the Northwood Cluster.
- Four middle school classrooms in the Wheaton Cluster.
- Six high school classrooms in the Einstein Cluster.
- Eight high school classrooms in the Walter Johnson Cluster.
- Ten high school classrooms in the Northwood Cluster.

Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. • Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget • June 30, 2015

	FY2015	FY2015	FY2016		FY2015	FY2015	FY2016
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET		ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET
	7/1/14	7/1/14	7/1/15		7/1/14	7/1/14	7/1/15
	6/30/15	6/30/15	6/30/16		6/30/15	6/30/15	6/30/16
Revenues				Expenses, cont.			
Membership Dues	2,415.00	3,200.00	3,000.00	Food Sponsorship	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foundation Contributions	0.00	0.00	0.00	<i>Organizational Support</i>			
Awards Dinner	1,480.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	Officers	94.88	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00	Committees	124.42	1,000.00	450.00
Total Revenues	3,895.00	5,700.00	5,500.00	Insurance	544.00	700.00	700.00
Expenses				Internet	119.40	0.00	200.00
Member Communications				Miscellaneous	29.95	150.00	142.00
Newsletter Printing/Postage	80.00	50.00	8.00	Total Expenses	3,633.27	5,700.00	5,500.00
Website	0.00	200.00	200.00	Net Income for Period	261.73	0.00	0.00
Projector & Sound System	0.00	0.00	0.00	Bank Balance [6/30/15]	13,667.12		
<i>Civic and Social Betterment</i>							
Federation Meetings	420.00	1,000.00	1,000.00				
Awards Dinner	1,920.62	2,500.00	2,500.00				
Foundation Membership	300.00	100.00	300.00				

MCCF President's Column: Welcome Back!

By Paula Bienenfeld, President

This is the first newsletter of the 2015–2016 membership year, with our first fall meeting on September 21st, same time (7:45 p.m.), same place (1st Floor Auditorium, County Council Office Building). Welcome back to our members. We hope you had a good summertime, and had time for a vacation to get away from the District/Md./Va. (DMV).

Over the summer our Executive Committee was busy discussing issues of interest to members and county residents, including the re-proposed Independent Transit Authority, which rose from the dead and is being reconstituted. We—and we hope you—are carefully watching its progress as we prepare for the consequences of this re-introduced attempt to bust our County's Char-

ter. It is likely we will need all hands again as this attempt may move forward to our state delegation this fall. So get your testimony ready and call your delegates now!

News of the weather and impacts of climate change on Maryland and the county also held our attention over the summer. Climate change is causing not only sea level rise (SLR), which affects our coastal state, but also causes more, and more intense, rain events which cause flooding. Because our infrastructure has not kept up with the coming changes, the flooding on our streets and in our basements will increase. At the same time that the infrastructure is increasingly inadequate, natural water sponges in the form of open planted lands are being destroyed and replaced with pavement and

built structures.

In addition, the main cause of climate change, greenhouse gases in the form of carbon dioxide, can be negated by trees. Each tree can absorb up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide every year. Yet here in Montgomery County, trees down-county are being clear cut to make way for unsustainable development, and our natural, treed, green lands are being paved over. Silver Spring is home to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which conducts numerous studies on this subject. According to a July 2014 report, "nuisance flooding," which creates flooding on streets and overtaxes our infrastructure, has increased significantly, between 300% and 925% along our national coasts since the 1960s, including here in Maryland, especially in Baltimore

President's Column, cont.

and Annapolis. Washington, D.C. saw a 373% increase. We think it's time to look at climate change effects in this county, take a deep breath, and, with a clear vision, consider what we need to do to prepare for the changes.

The Executive Committee also took a day for a work retreat, to examine our strengths and weaknesses and see how we can change to become more streamlined and move to the 21st Century with our electronic platforms, as well as attract new members. We welcome Jacquie Bokow, who will be supporting the Civic Federation by managing a newly designed website, which went live on September 2. Louis Wilen and Virginia Sheard had taken on the task of redoing the website and are working with Jacquie on the

redesign. Please check it out and let us know what you think.

Jacquie will also be working with Peggy Dennis, our newsletter editor, to format (thank you, Bob Dennis, for your many years of volunteering to do the formatting) and send out the newsletter to our members, so here's the first issue with a new "look" for the newsletter as well.

As part of our effort to streamline our Executive Committee meetings, we decided on the programs for the year at the retreat, to save the large amount of time we usual devote to this topic at our monthly committee meetings. One innovation will be an "Environmental PechaKucha." A PechaKucha is an event with lightning talks, where presenters get up and give quick, roughly 8-minute talks on a variety of topics, with slides. In this case, our Environmental Co-Chair, Jean Cavanaugh,

will organize a group of presenters. We also plan another Member Feedback Forum, the "UnProgram" that was so successful last spring.

We will retain our usual programs at budget time, as well as gear up for the Annual Budgetpalooza! with colleagues at the Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County and Montgomery County Taxpayers League, which we'll hold in February 2016. If you'd like to volunteer to work on this event, please let us know!

And most important, we want to continue the membership engagement. The Civic Federation is not, or should not be, an organization with members that sit and listen only. We want to be active, not reactive, and so this will be a new part of our organization.

Welcome back! ■

NEXT

Bicycling as an Alternative Transportation Mode

By Peggy Dennis, Past President, Transportation Committee Member

If you haven't been on a bicycle since you were a kid, now is the time to give it a try. The C&O Canal Bike Loaner Program described in the [May newsletter](#) will continue to loan out bicycles—all types and sizes of bicycles—for free at the Great Falls Tavern location in Potomac. The program will continue at least through the end of October and longer if weather permits.

On weekends and holidays bring a picnic, get a bike, and go for a spin. Bicycling along the Canal tow path is peaceful, beautiful, and a safe way to get around that requires no gas, no hunting for parking spaces, and gives you a bit of exercise, all at the same time.

Ready to move further with bicycling? The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) ran a "City Cycling" class for adults in Silver Spring on August 16. City Cycling is an essential class for all skill levels. If you're a seasoned city rider, they've got new tips and tricks for you. If you're new to biking, they'll help you master the fundamentals.

WABA instructors teach tactics to help you deal with traffic, communicate effectively, and transition from trails to roads and back again. They also cover bike handling maneuvers and bike infrastructure. Most importantly, they build confidence, and help you have fun, and get around safely and confidently by bike. Learn more about these classes at www.waba.org/adult-education. ■

NEXT

JUST FOR FUN!

Victorian Lyric Opera Company
presents

The Gypsy Baron

Vusic by Johann Strauss, Jr.
Book and Lyrics in a new English
adaptation by Guade Winter

September 11 & 12 at 8:00 p.m.

September 13 at 2:00 p.m.

F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre
Rockville Civic Center

[Buy Tickets Online](#) or call the Box
Office at 240-314-8690

Take your mind off the summer heat and the weighty issues before us, and enjoy one of the County's best amateur performance groups. The music is Strauss at his best. The plot and lyrics are delightfully silly. Tickets are reasonable and parking is free.

Know nonprofit, community theatrical or musical groups in MoCo? Tell mccfnewsletter@gmail.com.

Deer Hunting—Be Part of the Solution

By Peggy Dennis, Past President

On February 12, 2012, the Civic Federation passed the following resolution:

Whereas the Deer Management Work Group has been in effect since 1993, and managed hunts in selected parks have taken place since 1999, and

Whereas the County's population of white-tailed deer has increased despite these management efforts, and

Whereas upward trends in deer population coincide with increased Deer Vehicle Collisions, pervasive destruction of natural habitat in parks and stream valleys and landscaping in private yards, and increasing incidents of Lyme disease including sufferers living in suburban areas,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Montgomery County Civic Federation urges our county and state officials to expand funding and to work collaboratively towards liberalizing appropriate regulations to extend the hunting season for deer and facilitate controlled and safe hunting on both public and private lands.

At all levels, our government has been responsive to our requests regarding the need to reduce the deer population in the county. The Montgomery County Parks Department has added more parks each year to those where managed hunts and sharpshooter programs cull the herds. These programs will be carried out in 41 sites around the county including state parks and several federal facilities like NIST and NIH during the coming hunting season.

The Department is also initiating a pilot program to allow carefully selected groups of organized archery hunters to work in the Great Seneca and Watts Branch stream valley parks. And they have collaborated with us and with the Superintendent of the C. & O. Canal National Historic Park to write language and regulations for hunters working on private land to track and retrieve wounded deer that may wander into public park land.

Our delegation to Annapolis passed legislation in 2014 to decrease the "safety zone" for archery hunters from 150 yards to 100 yards. This allowed the County Council to pass corresponding legislation making it somewhat easier for archery hunters to work in suburban neighborhoods.

At the federal level, U.S. Rep-

MORE

Deer Hunting, cont.

representative Chris Van Hollen urged Superintendent Brandt to take steps to reduce the number of deer in the C&O Canal NHP. This is badly needed, particularly in the area of the Gold Mine Loop at Great Falls where the forest understory has been destroyed by overbrowsing. Superintendent Brandt has partnered with the Superintendent of the NHP at Harper's Ferry to apply for permission to carry out an Environmental Assessment (EA) of deer damage to both parks. Their application has been approved and they expect the EA to be completed by the summer of 2016 at which time they will make recommendations on measures to be taken to reduce the herd size.

All these measures are helpful, but the deer do not limit their browsing to parkland. Many of our

suburban and even urban neighborhoods are overrun with hungry and starving deer. And, as the old expression from the 1960s goes, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." Many homeowners would welcome an archery hunter into their yard to shoot from a balcony, elevated deck, or tree stand. This form of hunting is one of the safest sports in the U.S. But all it takes is one neighbor within 300 feet of the shooting area to refuse to sign the consent form, and the hunt cannot be carried out.

Fairfax County, by comparison, has no safety perimeter requirement. Any homeowner may hunt in his/her yard or authorize another archery hunter to do so. They are not even required to notify neighbors that hunting will be going on. Even with this very liberal approach to hunting, Virginia (like Maryland) has no

record of any person or pet being accidentally killed or injured by an archery hunter.

So, how can you help? First, get your local civic association working with you in this effort. We can help organize an informational program with expert archery hunters to speak to your members and address concerns about how, when and where bow-and-arrow hunting may take place.

Next, see if you have a place in your yard which may be appropriate for hunting. The position must be elevated and allow the hunter to shoot at a downward angle. This allows for an arrow which misses its target to go safely into the ground where it can be easily retrieved by the hunter. And it means that arrows will not go into your neighbor's yards. If you think you have a safe

MORE

Deer Hunting, cont.

hunting location, talk to your neighbors and see if they will support you. If you have their backing, contact a reputable archery hunting association. Three such groups in Montgomery County are:

- **Animal Connection Deer Management Team**

- **Bow Hunting Fire Fighters of Maryland**

- **Maryland Bowhunters Society**

An expert hunter will know all the legal requirements and regulations, advise you on the suitability of your location, and help with paperwork. This has worked miracles in my own neighborhood. A skilled hunter has taken out 17 deer over the past three seasons and left us with a much smaller, healthier, and less voracious herd. One last tip: a property that backs onto parkland or a public util-

ity corridor will require half as many permissions from neighbors as a home surrounded by other homes.

Find current regulations, Q&As, and much more information at the [MCCF website](#). ■

Youth Monthly Bus Passes are Now on Sale

Montgomery County residents who are 18 years old and younger can travel around the county with ease by purchasing Ride On's Youth Monthly Pass, which provides unlimited rides on Ride On buses. The passes, which must be loaded onto the Youth Cruiser SmarTrip Card, can be purchased for \$2 [online](#) or in

person at the following locations:

- Montgomery County Treasury, 255 Rockville Pike, Suite L-15, Rockville (240-777-8930).

- TRiPS Commuter Stores, 8413 Ramsey Ave. in Silver Spring and 17 Wisconsin Circle in Friendship Heights (240-773-8747). [A TRiPS store also will be located at the Silver Spring Transit Center, at left, once it opens Sunday, September 20.]

- Certain Giant Food, CVS, and other retail stores.

- County Libraries, the Treasury, TRiPS Stores, and some schools

See list of locations for purchase of Youth Cruiser SmarTrip Cards at www.RideOnBus.com. ■

NEXT



The new Silver Spring Transit Center

County Executive Leggett's 'Library of the Future' Summit is Thursday, September 24

No institution in our community is changing as rapidly as our libraries. Once viewed as a collection of books and printed resource material, libraries have become much more. Customers have access to books in electronic form and to online databases and publications. The library is a hub of community activity, from using Internet access to meeting rooms with new equipment to help in collaboration. Even the layout of buildings is different, adapting to the needs of customers who use their own devices.

The first Summit on the Future of Libraries was held six years ago and was considered a huge success in public feedback and turnout. Since then, libraries and their roles in our community have evolved even further.



Join County Executive Leggett, Libraries Director Parker Hamilton, and County Council President George Leventhal to hear keynote speaker Susan Benton, President and CEO of the Urban Libraries Council. In a new feature of this summit, the morning portion of the program at the Silver Spring Civic Building (above) will use "Google Hangout on Air" live to link to the Gaithersburg Library at 18330 Montgomery Village

Avenue, providing an opportunity for feedback from an audience in another part of the county.

FOUR WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

- **In-person** on Thursday, Sept. 24, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Silver Spring Civic Building.

- **Remotely** on Thursday, Sept. 24, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon, Gaithersburg Library.

- **Chat Online** with County Executive Leggett on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

- **Participate online** from anywhere via #MCPLFuture.

Registration is required for in-person attendance at either library and will close on September 17. For more information and details, visit the [MoCo website](#) or call 240-777-0002. ■

NEXT

Minutes of the June 8, 2015, Member Meeting 867

By Jean Cavanaugh and Harriet Quinn

Call to Order: President Paula Bienenfeld called the 867th session to order at 7:50 p.m. Introductions followed.

Agenda: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Minutes: It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the May meeting as they appeared in the Newsletter. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson reported excess expenditures for the 11 Months of \$119.

Elections: The following officers were nominated and unanimously approved for 2015-2016:

- President – Paula Bienenfeld
- First Vice President – Jim Zepp
- Second Vice President – Alan Bowser
- Treasurer – Jerry Garson
- Co-Secretaries – Danila Sheveiko and Jean Cavanaugh

PROGRAM

Membership Forum. There was extensive discussion and exchange of ideas regarding various issues and concerns affecting communities. The discussion included issues related to WSSC, Washington Gas, lack of neighborhood street resurfacing and damage due to deferred maintenance,

transportation issues, environmental issues, management of school construction, County budget issues and proposed tax increases.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Signing Up to Testify at a County Council Hearing

Do you want to sign up to testify at a County Council hearing? You may now do this [online](#) on the county's website. The list of speakers will be published three hours before the hearing. Checking the website at the time should give you an idea of when you will be called.

NEXT

Minutes of the June 18, 2015, Executive Committee Meeting

By Jean Cavanaugh, Co-Recording Secretary

The Executive Committee (Ex Com) convened at the Montgomery County Department of Traffic Management Center after a tour of the Gaithersburg facility from MCDOT Acting Deputy Director Emil Wolanin and Michael Kinney, and a discussion on traffic, signalization, transit, and emergency management services.

Call to Order: Paula Bienenfeld, President, called the meeting to order at 8:45 p.m.

Present: Jerry Garson, Jim Zepp, Carole Ann Barth, Jean Cavanaugh, Louis Wilen, Harriet Quinn. Past President Richard Kauffunger attended part of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes for May 18, 2015 ExCom Meeting: Paula called for and received unanimous approval of the minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson, Treasurer, reported net income of \$260.73 for the period.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ The first County Capital Improvement Program budget forum will be held at the Silver Spring Civic Building on June 29, 2015 at 7 pm.

■ Prince George's County is offering tours of its "net zero" house.

■ Pepco purchased a Solar Decathlon winning house from the University of Maryland and moved it to Gaithersburg where it is a demonstration house. Schools are welcome to tour the house.

■ The Silver Spring Library opens Saturday, June 30 at 11 a.m.

■ The Silver Spring Blues Festival runs all day Saturday, June 30.

■ Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) put the report on a one year study of area speed cameras on the [GOCA website](#).

■ Council Executive Ike Leggett spoke to GOCA and blamed the County's current financial woes on the recent Supreme Court decision, *Maryland v. Wynne*. Mr. Leggett warned of a significant property tax increase in 2017.

■ Transparency USA is doing a study on procurement systems to assess transparency.

PROGRAMS

The Committee discussed program topics for September (the County Executive's Transit Task

MORE

June ExCom Minutes, cont.

Force on the Independent Transit Authority, organized by Jerry Garson and Jim Zepp) and October (Development Review Process Part 2: Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, organized by Harriet Quinn and Virginia Sheard).

ISSUES DISCUSSED

■ ExCom discussed assigning some of the various administrative and technical tasks that are currently being maintained by ExCom members in addition to their other major responsibilities. The committee met with delegate Jacquie Bokow, who enjoys working with civic associations and manages her civic association's website and newsletter. She is willing to do the work for a reasonable stipend. Paula noted Peggy's position as newsletter edi-

tor, and discussed the possibility of sharing tasks. The ExCom voted unanimously to contract with Jacquie Bokow for \$49/month to help coordinate various tasks including membership database, online account for dues submittal, website maintenance (following the site redesign), newsletter design and distribution, and other administrative tasks as needed.

■ ExCom will put the issue of membership dues on the agenda for the September meeting. It was suggested that a flat annual rate of \$60 for associations may be more appropriate since we no longer mail the newsletter and flat rate would be easier to manage with an online account.

■ The ExCom also discussed Jim Zepp's proposal for a Civic Summit and thought it might be better held later in the year, given the work

involved in the ITA and Transit Task Force, and other issues.

COMMITTEE REPORTS**■ Environment Committee:**

The Planning Department released the annual Forest Conservation Report. The county Department of Transportation received a reduced budget, as compared to FY15, of \$500K for street tree stump removal. The County Executive had eliminated the tree stump removal budget but the Council restored some funds. The County Council will have additional work sessions on Bill 52-14 banning certain nonessential pesticides in September.

■ **Public Utilities Committee:** Noted customers questioning a WSSC \$11 per quarter billing fee which supposedly pays the cost of the meters.

MORE

June ExCom Minutes, cont.

■ **Transportation Committee:** County Transit Task Force had a public forum on the County Executive's Independent Transit Authority proposal on June 17. The Task Force is drafting a report due in August. There will be another public forum on the draft report in August. There is some discussion on regional solutions vs. a Montgomery County only plan.

■ **Land Use Committee:** County Council passed a bill to privatize the County Department of Economic Development. The Planning Board has a hearing on rewriting Subdivision code June 17. On June 30, the County Council will have a public hearing on substantive changes to the new zoning code. The executive will discuss the joint General Devel-

opment Agreement (GDA) for White Oak Science Gateway County/Percontee owned land on June 23. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the Bethesda Master Plan at the Bethesda Regional Services Center on June 24.

Newsletter: Next *Civic Federation News* deadline for September issue TBD.

Date and Location of Next Ex Com Meeting: The ExCom agreed to meet Sunday, July 19, for a retreat instead of holding the regular monthly meeting. (Minutes at right.)

Adjournment: Paula called for and received unanimous approval for adjournment at 11:05 p.m. ■

Summary: Executive Committee Retreat, July 19 2015.

By Jean Cavanaugh, Co-Secretary

Present: Paula Bienenfeld, Alan Bowser, Harriet Quinn, Danila Sheveiko, Jerry Garson, Jim Zepp, Carole Ann Barth, Peggy Dennis, Jean Cavanaugh.

The Executive Committee met from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a professional facilitator to review the organization, identify the shared vision, and map a new strategic direction.

Committee members developed action plans for MCCF priorities, communication and public relations, strengthening the organizational structure, and enhancing MCCF's government oversight role. ■

NEXT

Minutes of the August 13 Executive Committee Meeting

By Jean Cavanaugh, Co-Recording Secretary

The Executive Committee (ExCom) convened at the residence of Virginia Sheard on August 13, 2015.

Call to Order: Paula Bienenfeld, President, called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

Present: Jerry Garson, Peggy Dennis, Jim Zepp, Carole Ann Barth, Virginia Sheard, Jean Cavanaugh, and Harriet Quinn.

Meeting Agenda: The following amendments were made and received unanimous approval:

- Add Alan Bowser's telethon idea to discussion under Membership

portion of retreat Action Plan.

- Add Peggy Dennis's amendment to include legislative priorities to the retreat's Action Plan.

- Add discussion on MCCF position on County Council Bill 34-15 regarding the development impact taxes paid.

Approval of Minutes for June 18 ExCom Meeting at the County Department of Transportation Traffic Management Center in Gaithersburg, following a tour of the facility. Paula called for and received unanimous approval of the minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Garson, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$13,414.74.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Virginia Sheard will compile and publish notes from the July Executive Committee retreat.

- The website team, Virginia Sheard and Louis Willen, are waiting for final input. Virginia will make a list of issues that need to be resolved for the website.

- Jim Zepp was appointed to WMATA's Ridership Council as an individual, starting in September. The Transit Task Force (TTF) is meeting Tuesday, Aug. 18, and Wednesday, Aug. 19, and then frequently through September; Jim Zepp will sit on the TTF, which is discussing financing sources, including property taxes to fund County Executive Leggett's proposal for an ITA. A Draft Report will be issued in early September and a Public Forum on the Report is scheduled

MORE

Aug. ExCom Minutes, cont.

for September 24 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room.

- Committee for Montgomery meetings will start up again in September ([see website](#)).

- There are many new residential developments in the Walter Johnson cluster in spite of a school overcapacity moratorium. The County Council approved "ghost" classrooms to justify approving developments. Are mature trees and natural areas that provide stormwater management being lost? Are heat islands being created with more high density building?

PROGRAMS

- September's Program, coordinated by Jerry Garson and Jim Zepp, will be on the County Executive's renewed proposals for an Independent

Transit Authority to finance, build, operate, and maintain his proposed BRT projects. October's program, coordinated by Virginia Sheard and Harriet Quinn, will be on the Development Review Process (Part 2) and proposed changes to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

- Harriet Quinn led a discussion on programs for the 2015–2016 year, as discussed during the July ExCom retreat. Jerry will check into using the Executive Office Building (EOB) conference room beginning in 2016 instead of the COB First Floor Auditorium. The first meeting of the 2015–2016 year will be on September 21 in the County Council Building First Floor Auditorium. ExCom discussed whether or not to have a meeting with WSSC, or to work with Councilmember Roger Berliner to hold a larger County-wide meeting on WSSC issues, including rates, wa-

ter pipe replacement and sewer pipe lining projects. All future programs should have handouts for attendees. 2015–16 programs will include discussions on the proposed Independent Transit Authority, changes to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, presentations by State and County leaders, short presentations on neighborhood efforts to improve their environment, the budget process, and other topics.

ISSUES DISCUSSED

- Virginia Sheard will design generic business cards for ExCom members.

- Follow up on ExCom retreat Action Plans: There are five to work on—communications, accountability/institutions, membership, priorities action plan, organizational structure.

MORE

Aug. ExCom Minutes, cont.

- Establish master calendar for relevant events;
- Membership Action Plan: Alan to coordinate membership “telethon”
- Committee alignment: Discussed aligning MCCF committees with County Council committees;
- Legislative Priorities: There was a motion to support a resolution to: “reach out to our County delegation to the State Legislature as well as other legislators who have introduced legislation, and the Governor to liberalize bow and arrow deer hunting, in order to grow a coalition to support..” The ExCom voted to support this resolution.
- MCCF will contact the Montgomery County delegation about the proposed enabling legislation for creating an Independent Transit Authority (ITA) as well as previous

legislation about Regional ITA

- MCCF will continue to oppose proposed State bill authorizing student Board of Ed. member to vote on capital and operating budget, collective bargaining matters and school boundaries. .
- Committee Chairs will finalize priorities by August 20.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

■ **Transportation:** TTF meetings are being held all summer. TTF will issue a draft report in early September. Public hearing on the draft report will be held on September 24 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Hearing Room. See the [online schedule](#).

The TTF and County have tentatively worked out an agreement with the union where Ride On workers would remain County employees. New proposals for funding sources include increased Countywide

property tax above the Charter limit, excise taxes, and additional sales tax. County Executive senior advisor Tom Street told the TTF with regard to public discussion, “All we have to do is show we listened.” Some on the TTF request using processes to assure cost-effectiveness and responsible use of public funds, such as the Federal Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) which was done for projects like CCT.

On BRT Costs: The original capital cost estimate for 10 BRT routes plus the Corridor Cities Transitway was \$3.8 billion, excluding financing costs. Now, the TTF is only providing cost estimates for a Phase 1, which includes 3 of the original 10 routes and phase 1 of the Corridor Cities Transitway project (9 of 15 miles of the CCT). Although only one of these 4 routes is in the design

MORE

Aug. ExCom Minutes, cont.

phase, the TTF has estimated the project capital cost to be \$2.527 billion. With financing, the total cost is estimated to be \$4.5 billion. This estimate does *not* include ITA administration costs, fleet management, Ride On operations and maintenance, road reconstruction, street lights, signalization control, or certain land acquisition costs. The budget does not currently include escalation costs beyond first day of construction. MCCF has requested evaluation metrics for the BRT projects.

Jim Zepp pointed out some irregularities in the County’s FY16 Transportation operating budget. Jim will follow up with County Finance Director Joe Beach.

■ **Public Utilities:** On August 12, a State Judge denied a request by certain groups—such as the Maryland Office of Peoples’ Counsel—to temporarily block the Excelon-PEPCO merger. The groups, as well as Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, have opposed the merger for a number of reasons, including their belief that it will stifle competition.

■ **Planning and Land Use:**

■ The committee urges MCCF to support a bill to revise impact taxes, Bill 34-15 ([Public hearing packet 7/21/2015](#)). Because of current exemptions, transportation impact tax for new development currently brings in only 0.9% of revenue while transportation is 25% of the total Montgomery County budget. School impact tax for new development currently brings in 3% of revenue for schools. Education totals over 50%

of the County’s budget.

■ The County Council will consider an omnibus [ZTA 15-09](#) which is supposed to make technical corrections to the new zoning code. But it proposes to substantially change the code with regard to Accessory Apartments, which is an issue that was thoroughly debated and settled in 2013.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m. ■

MCCF Membership Time

It’s time to join—or renew your membership in—the MCCF for the new fiscal year!

Fill out a [2015–2016 Membership Form](#) and mail it in today!

SUPPORT THE CIVIC FED!