

Annual Program on Transparency and Accountability of Mont. Co. Government | P. 3

Eminent Domain Amendment to Md. Constitution Thwarted by Quick Activist Action | P. 4

Wayne Goldstein's Legacy | MCCF received a \$1K grant | P. 5

Is Maryland a Safe Haven for Child Sex Predators? | P. 6

Resolution on Md. Senate Bill 132: Crimes—Child Abuse/ Neglect—Failure to Report | P. 8

Mont. Co. Parks Dept. Joins Nationwide Synthetic Turf Class Action Fraud Suite | P. 9

Zepp Invited to Serve on Automated Transit Cmte. | P. 12

The State of Bicycling | P. 13

The Madeira DAS System | Approving and Relocating Cellular Poles in Stealth Mode | P. 15

Volunteers Needed for May 18 MCCF Awards Event | P. 17

Letter to MCCF from MCPS About Jan. 8 Meeting | P. 24

Civic Fed Tonight! | P. 14

Your Help Needed | P. 19

Want to Talk? | P. 21

TO PRINT, USE [PRINT VERSION](#)

of note

Next MCCF Meeting #892

Monday, February 12, 2018, 7:45 p.m. [Social Hour Begins at 7:00] @ the Executive Office Building in Rockville. It's MCCF's Annual Program on "Transparency and Accountability of the Montgomery County Government"

[AGENDA, P. 2](#) • [PROGRAM, P. 3](#)

Meeting Minutes

January 8 Meeting #891 **[P. 28](#)**

Executive Committee Meetings

SEE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

Membership Application

Join or Renew Now

[SEE FORM](#)

Federation Meeting #892

Monday, February 12, 2018

7:45 p.m.

Lobby Level Auditorium

Executive Office Building

101 Monroe Street

Rockville, Maryland

AGENDA

- 7:00 Social Time for Members
- 7:45 Call to Order/Introductions
- 7:50 Approval of Agenda
- 7:51 Announcements
- 7:57 Approval of Minutes, Jan. 8 Meeting #891 **P.28**
- 7:58 Treasurer's Report
- 8:00 Program: MCG Transparency & Accountability **P.3**
- 9:25 Committee Reports
- 9:35 Old and New Business
- 9:45 Adjournment

About MCCF Meetings

All monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public. They are held on the second Monday of each month, September through June, at 7:45 p.m.

The February meeting will be held in the **Lobby Level Auditorium of the Executive Office Building at 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.**

Walkers can enter by buzzing security at the door. You can park for free either in the lot at E. Jefferson and Monroe Streets or in the lowest level of the EOB. Drive onto the ramp in the front of the building (ignore “permit parking only” sign), turn left at the second, lower level; use the intercom at the gate to the parking garage and at the door to the elevators to inform security you’re attending the MCCF Meeting. ■

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 (agenda and details at left).

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

Civic Federation News

civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, SEE PAGE 25

Annual Program on Transparency, Accountability of Montgomery County Government

By Bailey Condrey & Danila Sheviko, First & Second Vice Presidents

Our February 12th general session will focus on transparency and accountability of government agencies operating in Montgomery County. Tom Devine, Legal Director of the globally renowned Government Accountability Project, will be our featured speaker with a presentation titled “Know Your Rights!”

Quasi-state agencies like Montgomery County Public Schools, WSSC, and Park & Planning do not have independent Inspector Generals with authority to provide oversight and enforcement. Any culture of secrecy requires a wall of denial, so the name of the County game is kill-the-messenger. Activist watchdogs who expose wrongdoing are smeared and slandered. Families

speaking out against the MCPS child sex abuse cover-up have been ostracized and some even pushed out of our community. People employed at agencies like MCPS are not covered by State of Maryland whistleblower protections, making it seem impossible to expose waste, fraud, and abuse to reform the system from the inside.

Tom Devine’s “Know Your Rights!” presentation will help us understand that truth-seeking is not only possible, it is essential to the health of any community. Mr. Devine will focus on what whistleblowers and truth-seekers need to know, the rights of victims and their families, how the Constitution and the legal system protects them in their quest to expose wrongdoing, the decision points a whistleblower must consider going forward, and

whether this is really what a potential whistleblower wants to do. GAP has been helping men and women make these decisions for decades, and then defending their rights in court. Many parents want answers about the ongoing MCPS child sexual abuse scandal. Knowing your rights can help you expose wrongdoing and injustice in our community.

GAP is the nation’s leading whistleblower protection and advocacy organization promoting government and corporate accountability since 1977. The Project was established in response to a critical need to protect high-profile whistleblowers, including Daniel Ellsberg, and has spent four decades defending government employees with a conscience, like Thomas Drake, John Kiriakou, and Edward Snowden.

Eminent Domain Amendment to Md. Constitution Thwarted by Quick Activist Action

By Danila S. Sheveiko, 2nd Vice President

Stealth legislation to expand Montgomery County government's "Quick Take" eminent domain authority was withdrawn by County Executive Isiah Leggett on Friday, Jan. 26, following a rapid response from the civic community.

The day before, vigilant members of the Civic Federation and the Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County noticed that a State bill titled "MC 27-18 Eminent Domain—Expansion of 'Quick Take' Authority" was added to the Friday morning voting agenda of **Montgomery County's State House Delegation**.

Hours of e-mail outreach later, a **fast-paced social media campaign** picked up more speed after District 18 Delegate Al Carr posted a **copy**

of the impending State bill on Facebook. The next morning, people raced down to Annapolis to see the House Delegation vote on MC 27-18, only to have the bill withdrawn by Chair Del. Shane Robinson at the request of the County Executive as District 18 Senate candidate Dana Beyer recorded the proceedings with a smartphone (**view video**).

This short success story only underscores the overwhelming odds faced by civil society daily in the never-ending battle for transparency and accountability of Montgomery County government. MC 27-18 would have given the County expedited eminent domain powers unprecedented in Maryland, that would have required a change to the State Constitution to boot, yet there was **no public notice** save for an

obscure House Delegation **meeting agenda** uploaded less than 48 hours before the vote was to take place. No public hearings or other formal public input. The Montgomery County House Delegation meetings are held off-camera on Friday mornings with no minutes to speak of. Local activist have to take time off work and drive all the way down to Annapolis to observe and record the proceedings. Well into the 21st century,

MORE

February Program, cont.

While Americans enjoy many rights that the citizens of other nations don't, it is organizations like GAP and the Civic Federation that slog it out in the trenches in defense of Americans' right to know about government waste, fraud, abuse, and illegality. ■

Eminent Domain, cont.

there is no audio/video recording of these **important Delegation meetings** despite numerous requests from the Civic Federation, including a jest **Twitter campaign** to fund a \$14.95 Web camera for the State Delegates.

All jokes aside, transparency is a urgent need, because the Montgomery County Council was reportedly briefed on MC 27-18 at their off-camera “retreat” session in an unmarked room on the 3rd floor of the Rockville Public Library nearly two days before the vote was to take place, and not a single Councilmember thought a bill to give the County unprecedented expedited eminent domain powers to take people’s land away deserved a single Tweet or Facebook post to alert community leaders and the public at large. Ironically, the Council’s sparse “retreat”

session agenda **did not even mention MC 27-18** or any review of State legislation at all for that matter, but did have an item titled “Town hall meetings and community engagement.” People only learn what’s going on at these “retreats” if some activists show up to film, **like last year**, when important decisions were made and votes taken by Councilmembers in-between an excited discussion about the urgent need to improve quality of food served at the Council Building cafeteria in Rockville.

The Washington Post **covered the story**, but failed to interview any of the activists involved. MC 27-18 and many other issues will be discussed at the Civic Federation’s 892nd general session featuring our annual program on accountability and transparency of Montgomery County government on February 12th in Rockville. ■

Wayne Goldstein’s Legacy

By Jim Zepp, President

MCCF recently received an unexpected \$1,000 grant from the Wayne Goldstein Memorial Foundation, established by his family to continue his dedication to community improvement and civic activism. Goldstein was a tireless advocate for citizens involved with land use/zoning, environment, historic preservation, and housing issues. For those of us fortunate to have known Wayne’s boundless energy and support for our community issues, as well as his warm humor in the face of adversity by powerful forces, it is touching and humbling to be still benefitting from Wayne so long after we lost him in 2009. The Exec. Cmte. will decide an appropriate use of the funds; members are welcome to submit suggestions. The decision will be announced at a later date. ■

Is Maryland Proving to Be a Safe Haven for Child Sex Predators?

SENATE BILL AIMS TO PROTECT THOSE WHO FAIL TO REPORT CHILD SEX ABUSE

By Danila S. Sheveiko, 2nd Vice President

Maryland is a State where **installing a non-low-flow toilet** could land you in prison for six months. Yet Maryland is also one of only two States in the nation with **no criminal penalties** for the failure to report child sex abuse to child protective services and the local police.

Across the Mason-Dixon Line in Pennsylvania (Jerry Sandusky is not the only one behind bars), Penn State's former President and two other university administrators were also handed prison sentences for that the child sex abuse cover-up. On our side of the Old Line—in Montgomery County—we have **documented proof** that Cloverly Principal Melissa Brunson **knew about John**

Vigna going back at least to 2008, and that top MCPS administrators—including Superintendent Joshua Starr—knew about John Vigna at least since 2013. Even *The Washington Post* **had to admit** last year that another child sex abuse “case appears to be the latest of several in which a Montgomery County school system employee was admonished for repeated incidents of inappropriate behavior with students but stayed on the job and allegedly crossed the line again.”

To our knowledge, none of these officials have even been reprimanded, let alone had their licenses revoked. Ms. Brunson is still the Cloverly Principal managing **yet another pedophile scandal**, and Mr. Starr was allowed to resign with

honors and benefits – free to spend his time **“having a lot of fun, writing a lot, speaking a lot.”**

Numerous meaningful efforts to criminalize individuals looking the other way while children are sexually abused, molested, and raped have failed in the Maryland General Assembly in large part due to **public and private opposition** by members of the Montgomery County House Delegation. Instead of protecting children from sexual abuse, the Maryland legislature passed House Bill 642 that, according to activists, is **“a stealthy and significant win to the Archdiocese of Baltimore**—and any other employer that has allowed perpetrators under their purview to persist in terrorizing children.”

Haven for Predators, cont.

Unfortunately, that is not even half the story. As of October 1st, 2017, background checks have become meaningless; thanks to a new Maryland law, teachers convicted for molesting children are now able to expunge their records and get any job interacting with children they want. Just as activists predicted and warned the legislators, convicted child molesters are beginning to expunge their records: *MCPS Parents: You Were WARNED and Now it is Your Reality. Teachers who were Convicted of Sexually Abusing Students or Assaulting Students are Having Their Convictions ERASED.*

Efforts to repeal this legislative travesty died in House Committees last year, making Maryland officially a safe haven for child sex predators. Not stopping there, *Senate Bill 132*

is now being fast-tracked through committees to protect those individuals who cover up for the predators. The bill masquerades as a step forward, but criminal penalties will be only enforced when the mandated reporter, like a principal, has “actual knowledge” of child sex abuse. According to experts, this means that the principal would have to actually be in the room as the molestation occurs in real time.

According to the bill’s sponsor, Senator Bobby Zirkin (D11), there is a definition of “actual knowledge” in case law, but activists say that no appellate court in Maryland has holding which defines “actual knowledge” and there is no definition for it in statute according to the best research available. Therefore, if enacted, this law will allow principals like Ms. Brunson and superintendents like Mr. Starr to stay silent and

complicit despite receiving report after report, complaint after complaint from child victims, distraught parents, and concerned teachers... because neither one of them was in the room when the actual sex abuse occurred, so the predators need not worry about being reported to child protective services and the local police.

Members of the Civic Federation testified against SB132 at the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee public hearing in Annapolis last week ([view video](#)). With the legislation fast-tracked and the hearing scheduled before our next general session, the Federation’s Executive Committee voted to support the bill with amendments. A resolution on SB132 will be submitted for a floor vote at our next general session on February 12th in Rockville. ■

Resolution on Maryland Senate Bill 132 Crimes—Child Abuse and Neglect—Failure to Report

Whereas Maryland remains one of only two states in the nation without criminal penalties for failure to report child sex abuse to the proper authorities;

Whereas meaningful bills to introduce criminal penalties have failed in Annapolis for the last 17 years;

Whereas the Maryland General Assembly has instead passed a law that protects the Baltimore Archdiocese and other major employers like Montgomery County Public Schools from litigation for past child sex abuse cover-ups, and another law that allows convicted child sex offenders to expunge their criminal records;

Whereas Senate Bill 132 as introduced would make sure that once victims of sexual abuse turned

eighteen years of age, the criminal penalties for failure to report would not apply; and

Whereas Senate Bill 132 as introduced undermines Maryland’s extant child sex abuse reporting mandate and Attorney General opinions by setting a legal threshold of “actual knowledge” that has not been defined by Maryland statute or appellate courts and which could be construed as requiring the actual witnessing of a child sex crime in real time as it occurs;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Montgomery County Civic Federation supports Senate Bill 132 with amendments:

1. **CHANGE** “actual knowledge” to “constructive knowledge” under Criminal Law Section 3-602.2. page 2, line 4, number (1):

(A) A PERSON WHO IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD OR MAKE A WRITTEN REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD UNDER § 5–704 OF THE FAMILY LAW ARTICLE MAY NOT KNOWINGLY FAIL TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED NOTICE OR MAKE THE REQUIRED WRITTEN REPORT IF THE PERSON:

- (1) HAS [ACTUAL] CONSTRUCTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ABUSE OR NEGLECT; OR
- (2) WITNESSES THE ACT OF THE ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

2. **DELETE** Criminal Law Section 3-602.2. page 2, lines 9 and 10, letter (C) in its entirety:

[(C) THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO A FAILURE TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE THAT OCCURS DURING THE TIME THE CHILD IS A MINOR.]

3. **CHANGE** “misdemeanor” to

Montgomery Parks Department Joins Nationwide Synthetic Turf Class Action Fraud Suit

PUBLIC PRESSURE FROM ACTIVISTS FORCES AGENCY TO FINALLY ACT ON DEFECTIVE ATHLETIC TURF

By Danila S. Sheveiko, 2nd Vice President

While the local press did not cover the Civic Federation's December media campaign or the [January newsletter expose](#), *Forbes* magazine's [Mike Ozanian](#) followed up on the story and got to break one of his own last Wednesday when Mike Riley, Director of Montgomery Parks, made a surprise announcement that, after years of inaction, the agency is finally joining the nationwide class action fraud lawsuit against the manufacturer of synthetic turf athletic fields sold to the Parks Department and the Montgomery County Public Schools system. Here's an excerpt from the *Forbes* story, "[Maryland County Has Joined Huge Artificial](#)

[Turf Class Action Lawsuit](#)": "After careful consideration of the condition and damage to various turf fields purchased from Field Turf, including the field located at Montgomery Blair High School, and legal options, the Commission will seek relief as a member of the class in the matter pending before the United States District Court—District of New Jersey, [In Re: Field-Turf Artificial Turf Marketing and Sales Practices Litigation](#), Case No.: 17-md-02779 MAS. In this case, it is alleged that Field Turf misrepresented the reliability, performance, and cost-effectiveness of its turf fields in violation of the Maryland Consumer Protection Act; knowingly provided turf fields which contained defects in materials that

were never disclosed; and, otherwise asserted that the fields provided were in merchantable condition and fit for their intended purpose, in breach of its express and implied warranties."

This is a stunning reversal for [MORE](#)

Resolution on Bill 132, cont.

"felony" and "not exceeding" to "of at least" in Criminal Law Section 3-602.2. page 2, lines 6,7,8, letter (B):

(B) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A [MISDEMEANOR] FELONY AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO A FINE [NOT EXCEEDING] OF AT LEAST \$1,000 OR IMPRISONMENT [NOT EXCEEDING] OF AT LEAST 6 MONTHS OR BOTH. ■

Parks' Class Action, cont.

the Parks Department that, just like MCPS, has for years ignored warnings and stonewalled public information requests from the Civic Federation's Environment Committee volunteers concerned that the **playing fields made from shredded tires contain lead** and twelve **known human carcinogens**, and are failing to meet the lowest concussion safety standards in the industry at an alarming rate.

The Parks Department did not file suit or a warranty claim on the Blair High School football field after **activists obtained and publicized concussion safety reports proving these fields are deadly dangerous**. Despite the mounting evidence at home, and **a slew of lawsuits by local jurisdictions and school districts across the nation**, the Parks Depart-

ment allowed the field warranty to expire and funded a replacement field surface by **cutting other Parks projects around Mont. County**.

That's why this surprise move by Parks to join the federal lawsuit leaves MCPS in a lurch: the **school district's website still insists the fields are cost-effective**, "safe," "high quality," and "professional-level" despite third-party reports obtained by the Civic Federation and **industry experts stating otherwise on the record in the mainstream media**. To make matters worse for the school system, in a memo obtained by MCCF's Education Committee last year, MCPS Chief Operating Officer Andrew Zuckerman **admits that they don't even have any records of the required annual concussion safety tests** prior to the ones obtained by activists through Maryland Public Informa-

tion Act requests. **Warranty claims have not been filed**. The warranties have expired. Millions of taxpayer dollars wasted on a defective toxic children's product. The fields are still in operation and are being used by MCPS students as if nothing had happened.

Last month, MCPS Superintendent Jack R. Smith was a featured speaker at the Civic Federation's annual education program that focused on concerns about the MCPS operating budget, but **walked out of the meeting early without answering any questions** or providing a timeline for any future response—**with TV cameras rolling**. Having confirmed attendance, Board of Education Members did not show up to the meeting at all. County Councilmembers fund the school district's \$2.59 billion budget, but

Parks' Class Action, cont.

refuse to exercise their fiduciary duty to investigate the misuse of funds and the associated wrongdoing, like the continued exposure of children enrolled at MCPS to a toxic defective product.

In theory, the County Council could honor their obligation to protect the children and the taxpayer—and restore transparency and accountability to MCPS—by taking two simple steps:

1. Use their power of subpoena to unseal the annual concussion safety reports, so we can learn when MCPS knew the fields posed a deadly hazard (and who covered it all up) by using the Council's power to swear in witnesses so any MCPS administrators caught in a lie during hearings would face criminal charges.

2. Use the Council's power to convene as the Board of Health (**MC Code Sec. 24-1**) to mandate the County Health Officer place warning signage on all these fields in accordance with **official CDC guidelines**, so the parents can finally learn the truth:

UNITED STATES CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) HEALTH ALERT NETWORK HEALTH ADVISORY ON POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN ARTIFICIAL TURF
Public Health Issues, Actions, and Recommendations: Placards and Warning Signs:

1. After playing on the field, individuals are encouraged to perform aggressive hand and body washing for at least 20 seconds using soap and warm water.
2. Clothes worn on the field

should be taken off and turned inside out as soon as possible after using the field to avoid tracking contaminated dust to other places. In vehicles, people can sit on a large towel or blanket if it is not feasible to remove their clothes. These clothes, towels, and blankets should be washed separately and shoes worn on the field should be kept outside of the home.

3. Eating while on the field or turf product is discouraged.

4. Avoid contaminating drinking containers with dust and fibers from the field. When not drinking, close them and keep them in a bag, cooler, or other covered container on the side of the field.

Why the County Council's practice is so different from theory will be a topic of discussion at the Civic

Parks' Class Action, cont.

Federation's 892nd general session featuring our annual program on transparency and accountability in Montgomery County government on February 12th in Rockville. **This story received good coverage on WTOP 103.5 FM.** Two days after local media picked up the story, **Councilmember Elrich issued a press release commending Parks Director Riley** "for his willingness to address safety and financial issues" and thanking "Safe Healthy Playing Fields Coalition and members of the Montgomery County Civic Federation for helping me raise these issues." No mention of accountability, MCPS, or the important role played by the **Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County** in this battle. ■

Zepp Invited to Serve on Automated Transit Committee

MCCF President Jim Zepp has been invited to serve on the National Academy of Sciences' Transportation Research Board's Standing Committee on Automated Transit Systems. The committee is concerned with the full range of relationships among those physical and nonphysical factors found to affect the healthful functioning of major activity centers. These include the types of and demand for circulation services and their relationship to land use densities and configurations; the capacities, physical characteristics, operating characteristics, and service-related amenities of automated people movers, moving walkways, shuttle bus services, personal automated transport, ropeways, and other systems designed to meet circulation needs; parking policies and locations,

parking-pedestrian and parking-transit interfaces, station and stop design and location; and economic, planning, implementation and maintenance aspects of these systems.

This appointment is in recognition of his work regarding the future of transportation systems and the implications for community planning. He has served on the D.C. Transportation Advisory Board, WMATA Riders Advisory Council, and the County Transit Task Force.

Mr. Zepp looks forward to working with some national experts on the application of emerging technologies to transportation services and urban development. "This is an exciting period of evolutionary change comparable to the period when affordable automobiles replaced horses as the primary means for individual mobility." ■

The State of Bicycling in Montgomery County: New Pepco ROW Trail

By Peggy Dennis, Past President and Transportation Committee Member

January 25 was a great day for bicycle advocates countywide. Despite the cold and intense wind, we started the morning with the groundbreaking celebration for the Pepco shared-use recreational path. MCCF was one of a number of advocacy groups that fought for this facility over the past years. Councilmember Roger Berliner worked with me to draft a Civic Federation letter to the president of Exelon Corporation asking for their support for a public path. Prior to that, Pepco had said, “No way, never gonna happen.”

With Exelon’s backing, Pepco did a 180-degree turn around and, on Jan. 25, ground was broken for the first section of the trail, a natural

surface path running from the South Germantown Recreation Park near the Maryland SoccerPlex east to the Muddy Branch Stream Valley.

The trail is being created and built through a collaboration be-

tween Pepco and Montgomery Parks. Maintenance will be provided by the not-for-profit Mid-Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts (MORE). In the future, a paved trail should

MORE

**GROUNDBREAKING FOR THE
PEPCO RIGHT-OF-WAY TRAIL**



State of MC Bicycling, cont.

be extended east from the Muddy Branch to an area near the Westfield Montgomery Mall. This trail shows up in the draft Bicycle Master Plan as part of the Neighborhood Breeze-way network.

On Jan. 25, I testified before the Planning Commission on the draft of the new Bicycle Master Plan. I have been serving on the Working Group for this plan for the past two years. My testimony fell into three broad categories:

1. That the recommendations for networks of bike facilities that would help the average rider safely and confidently get to neighborhood schools, libraries, recreation and senior centers, and commercial areas were lacking.

2. That the intersections where major roads cross the Beltway, I-270,

and the ICC have recommendations for specific, European-style improvements to let bicyclists and pedestrians safely cross the on- and off-ramps where speeding drivers make for dangerous conflicts between the different modes of transportation.

3. That all utility corridors—including oil, gas, water, and sewer—be shown as future shared-use paths. Yes, they are out there. Though narrower than Pepco's grand transmission corridors, they hold great potential to add to the Breezeway network.

Testimony from local civic leaders showed that a number of community activists have taken the time to study the Bike Master Plan. Problems and potential solutions were well-articulated. If you have not yet done this, February 1 is the deadline for written comments to be submitted to the Planning Commission. You can see the [draft Master Plan online](#). ■

CIVIC FED TONIGHT!

SEEKING POSSIBLE SPEAKERS FOR YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETINGS?

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

The Madeira DAS System: Approving and Relocating Cellular Poles in Stealth Mode

By Rick Meyer, Montgomery County Coalition for Control of Cell Towers (MC4T) and Potomac Crossing Homeowners Association

This article demonstrates the lack of transparency and public notice involved in the County's flawed cell tower siting approval process.

The first actual public notice that eleven 60' and taller cellular poles—topped by sets of 3' antennas—were to be installed within neighborhoods in Potomac was the arrival of construction teams. They came in late December 2011 with augers and cranes, hauling special trailers for poles longer than a semi-trailer.

Nearby residents had no reasonable way of knowing anything about these eleven poles, let alone that five were being placed in completely different spots from where they had

been originally evaluated and approved.

Despite clear requirements in County ordinance (COMCOR 2.58E), there had been no opportunity to offer input or comments more than 18 months earlier when **application number 201005-06 was considered in May 2010** and ultimately approved by the County's "Tower Committee." There was no specific notice or public vetting regarding changes to these five locations.

This is the story of how these poles came to be. It's a complicated story which highlights the absence of public notice and input, inadequate evaluation of applications and subsequent changes after approvals, and failure to adequately verify permitting information.

These Distributed Antenna System (DAS) network poles were designed to form an interconnected telecommunications necklace along Brickyard, MacArthur, and Falls Roads to provide what was promised to be better wireless services. That necklace is referred to as the Madeira DAS System and was built by a private developer. Each pole or "node" is capable of housing equipment and antennas for multiple wireless providers as tenants.

One of the five relocated DAS poles would become the 68' pole and antennas, which stands alone just 42' from the front walls of a residence at 7800 Brickyard Road. That DAS pole "replaced" an existing 30' stub pole. It was originally authorized to be across the street,

Madeira DAS System, cont.

150' away, to replace a 52' utility distribution pole, set among the main line of poles and tall trees running parallel to 7701 Brickyard. Pictures of that DAS node have since appeared in County filings to the FCC, in nationwide reports issued by the independent firm that operates as the Tower Committee consultant, and in documents produced by the County's outside counsel. Ironically, these documents encourage regulations that protect residents from microcells that are too large, too close to dwellings, or that are otherwise threats.

Two other, even taller 78'4" Madeira DAS poles would be similarly relocated across the street and out of main distribution lines, further north on Brickyard. Both would more than double the height of the

stub poles they replaced. A fourth pole was shifted several hundred yards north, also out of the main distribution lines, to repurpose an existing 30' stub pole on Oaklyn Drive at the Falls Road Intersection.

The site of the fifth pole would be shifted 100' to sit "mid-span" in distribution lines on MacArthur Blvd., to supplement rather than replace any utility pole. The Tower Committee has required supplemental DAS poles—set "mid-span" and, thus, without a primary utility line support purpose—to be subject to the conditional use (special exception) hearing process. No such hearing was held in this case.

The Madeira DAS story begins in April 2010 when the wireless developer submitted a 70-plus page application containing detailed "blueprints," photos, maps, and explanations for a batch of eleven DAS

poles. The application was referred to the "Tower Coordinator"—a contractor to the Tower Committee—to complete detailed technical review, including preliminary zoning recommendations. (Regrettably, while the Tower Committee just announced that applications can be viewed online, the link to application number 20100506 is missing in the "database" spreadsheet.)

The Tower Coordinator took just 15 calendar days to evaluate and recommend all eleven poles, even though DAS technology—and this wireless developer—were new to the County. Further, this large application was allowed as a "batch" submission of eleven poles, while the Tower Committee application is designed to accommodate only one site per submittal.

Up until that point, almost all

Volunteers Needed for May 18th MCCF Awards Event

The Civic Federation's Annual Awards event will be held on Friday, May 18, 2018. More details on the event will follow in future newsletters.

We need volunteers to help coordinate the event as well as volunteers to serve on the Awards Selection Committee [Wayne Goldstein and Sentinel Awards and Star Cup]. The work of the Awards Selection Committee includes accepting nominations for award recipients, evaluating those nominations, and making final recommendations on the awardees. The work should be of short duration and may be done largely by phone.

If you can help with the Event or Selection Cmte. or have a award nomination, contact Jim Zepp, president AT montgomerycivic.org. We cannot do this without your help! ■

Madeira DAS System, cont.

wireless facilities in Montgomery County were built on large steel monopoles or lattice structures, or atop taller buildings. Some of those towers were 200' tall or higher. Over time, most of these towers bristled with up to dozens of "collocated" antennas and required shipping-container-sized equipment cabinets on adjacent ground for transmitting, processing, and cooling.

DAS was a game changer in May 2010 with a whole new set of engineering and siting requirements. The key premise was expanding cellular coverage by dispersion of network nodes on relatively smaller, usually wooden, existing utility poles with most located on the public rights-of-way.

By installing interconnecting

the nodes to "work together" with a mothership (in the Madeira DAS System, the mothership was an existing 130' monopole hidden in heavily wooded section of a private golf course), it was possible to increase coverage without erecting any additional large (macro) cell towers in this residential area.

When the Tower Committee met at its regular monthly meeting on May 4, 2010, to vote on the Coordinators evaluation of eleven Madeira DAS nodes, the total discussion time probably took less than 30 minutes, if that much. **Meeting minutes** reflect no input from the public on the applications. No residents spoke at the meeting, as the public is almost never allowed to speak at Tower Committee sessions.

A number of regulatory steps clearly mandated in the County

Madeira DAS System, cont.

Code are not addressed in the minutes. Did the Department of Transportation (DOT) provide any advance notice to residents who would be impacted by these poles? Did County DOT, the “land-owning agency” that controls roads and rights-of-way, solicit public input? If so, did DOT evaluate that input and submit it for the Tower Committee’s review of the DAS applications? Did DOT, the Tower Coordinator, the Tower Committee, or *anyone* consider alternative sites to minimize adverse impacts to surrounding land uses?

The Tower Coordinator’s evaluation included several conditions: completion of a Franchise Agreement between the developer and the County, and signoffs from both the Park Service and Historic Preserva-

tion Commission or HPC. (At least one pole in the batch would be on C&O Canal Park land, and a section of Falls Road was considered Rural and Rustic.) An executive from the developer offered verbal assurances at the May meeting that the Franchise Agreement would be completed soon, and that sign-off letters would be forthcoming from the US Park Service and HPC. (The **Franchise Agreement** was, in fact, signed in September 2010.)

The absence of a formal contract between the County and the developer did not delay the vote. A motion was made by the Committee member from M-NCPPC to formally “recommend” the Madeira DAS application. A second for the motion came from the Committee member from DPS. The vote to “recommend”—in the parlance of the Tower Committee—the Madeira

application was unanimous. Total time from filing application through approval by the Tower Committee was 23 calendar days.

Had the Committee and the Tower Coordinator taken more time to carefully review these applications, or had there been a more transparent process that invited the eyes of the public, they might have spotted several other important issues.

First, none of the engineering drawings/blueprints submitted for any of the eleven poles are signed and stamped by a licensed engineer, making them inadmissible in Maryland for official review purposes.

Secondly, several of the poles show that the wireless developer intended to install aerial fiber-optic distribution lines in violation of the Zoning Ordinance (**Utilities 3.6.7.**)

Madeira DAS System, cont.

Fiber-optic distribution lines are an essential component of the wireless DAS network. Referred to as “back-haul,” it enhances the transmission capabilities of each node. However, Montgomery County Code specifically prohibits the installation of aerial distribution lines other than for electricity. Fiber-optic distribution lines are only permitted underground. This is part of larger objective of the County to move future wires underground and, thus, minimize the proliferation of wires and poles.

Third, the Tower Committee recommended the DAS network applications, contrary to its stated policy of requiring the authorizations of all property owners. Reviewing an application that does not have a valid franchise agreement may be an

anomaly. But it is standard Tower Committee practice to review applications *without* the authorization of the public utility company that owns the poles.

Fourth, the Zoning Ordinance and the Building Code give the public utility company authority to manage the construction and design of utility distribution poles and any attachments. The County does not typically inspect utility architecture. It generally leaves inspections up to the regulated public utility, which is a process that is disjointed from prior reviews and opaque to the public.

A very unusual “discussion item” appeared in the **November 3, 2010, Tower Committee minutes** as the very last matter on the agenda. The minutes said, “*(The developer) provided notice that (the utility com-*

MORE

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!!!

**Please volunteer for MCCF’s
Nominating Committee.
The MCCF will only be effective
with good leadership.**

**Recommendations
are needed for:**

**President
1st Vice President
2nd Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer**

**A report will be due by May.
Contact Jim Zepp at jzepp1953@gmail.com to volunteer
or ask questions.**

Madeira DAS System, cont.

pany) required changes to some of the poles proposed for placement of eight of the nodes proposed for the Madeira and Norbeck DAS locations. Adjacent poles or new poles set “mid-span” between existing poles will be used instead.”

Specifics on the relevant application numbers or pole sites covered by this discussion item are not provided in the minutes, so, to the casual observer, it is not easy to understand to what this item was referring. There is no mention in publicly available meeting records of what exactly was contained in the specific “notice” by the developer, nor what was actually discussed, and by whom on this topic at the November 2010 meeting. Nor is there any explanation of what action, if any, was taken by the Com-

mittee.

The entire matter subsequently “goes cold” in Tower Committee records. But on April 20, 2011, almost one year after the original Tower Committee recommendations approving the poles and locations, DPS issued Public Right of Way Permit #268780. That permit authorized construction to “*Replace pole, cable, and associated equipment to provide services in accordance with (UTILITY COMPANY) PLAN NO. 3356362*” in front of premise address shown as 7701 Brickyard Road. Plan #3356362 is actually a diagram (also unstamped and unsigned) attached to the permit, which provides that a 68' tall “replacement” pole and antennas will be substituted for a 30' stub pole.

However, that new location shown on the diagram was on the property line separating 7800 and

7812 Brickyard Road (across the road, out of the utility lines). Other similar permits for changes to other, now different, pole locations were issued by DPS.

The fact that the permit was for a wireless facility is *not* mentioned, nor, for that matter, is there any reference to original Tower Committee application #201005-06 as required by County ordinance (COMCOR 2.58E). The vague description on the permit makes this appear to be just another routine utility maintenance activity. There is no mention on the permit of the pole previously approved at 7701 Brickyard Road, which was shown in original application #201005-06 as recommended by the Tower Committee.

In other words, in total violation of County ordinance, there is no way to easily backtrack through the

Madeira DAS System, cont.

permitting process to see how (or if) that wireless facility at 7800 Brickyard Road was properly reviewed by the Tower Committee.

Seven more months would elapse before the construction crews and cranes arrived in Potomac in late December 2011. After the poles were installed, neighborhood residents promptly sought correction of the error. In response to their January 2012 petition, sent to the public utility company and the developer, the utility referenced Montgomery County's authorization, but the developer promised to conduct a "site study."

Two months later, an unspecified resident called the County's 311 Help Line complaining about large pole installed at 7800 Brickyard Rd, and was assigned Service Request

199963079. On March 15, a DPS Inspector dutifully visited the site, but, based on information contained in permit #268870, reported "No Violation Found." Before departing, he left a business card in the complainant's front door and a voice mail. When updating his activities that day in the computer records, the County inspector makes no mention of the significant discrepancies between the address on the permit and the actual pole. It is not clear if he knew that the Tower Committee had previously approved a different location.

On same date, that DPS inspector takes separate action to release a "final" permit 268870 in the County's computer system.

In April 2012, four months after the poles appeared, **the residents petitioned the County Council.** In the

MORE

SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT?

*Need to share
a community concern?*

*Want to know how to do
something for your own
civic association?*

*Would like to meet
your fellow civic activists?*

Come early to the February 12 meeting. From 7:00 to 7:45 p.m., members of the MCCF Executive Committee will be available to talk in the EOB Auditorium. Light refreshments will keep you from going hungry. Be social, be a part of the civic movement, and be here.

Madeira DAS System, cont.

petition, the homeowners requested the 7800 Brickyard Road pole be moved, even suggesting the pole be relocated away from houses to nearby, heavily wooded public parkland several hundred yards north.

But the Council, apparently, put full faith in the expertise and approval processes of the both the Tower Committee and the Department of Permitting Services. Except those approvals and permits were wrong. In any event, the Council took no action on the petition. Of course, there was no People's Counsel in 2012. Although the homeowners' complaint to the Council arrived less than 30 days following the DPS final permit, there is no indication that the aggrieved homeowners were ever apprised of their rights to seek revocation of that DPS permit from

the Board of Appeals.

EPILOGUE

The Madeira DAS system was not the only area of the County where locations were quietly changed after formal approvals. Based on recent research, we identified three poles on Norbeck Road that were part of a DAS installation by the same developer (approved at the same time as the Madeira DAS poles) which were also quietly moved after approvals. And, more recently in North Potomac in 2016, three new and or mid-span DAS poles were installed without the developer completing required conditional use hearings, and a fourth pole quietly moved to a different location. No opportunity for public comment was provided for any of these poles. The changes to new locations were not publicly vetted.

The prime objective of DAS in 2010 was simply offering more transmission coverage. In recent years, this objective and technology has morphed. The industry relies upon DAS for both transmission coverage and to enhance transmission speed—transmission “capacity”—particularly for uses such as data transmission and video streaming.

Achieving capacity requires the installation of nodes in close range to the user, whether a vehicle, a business, or a dwelling. However, because these microcell transmitters have very limited range, developers require frequent spacing of the DAS nodes (or, in some cases, another technology of separate antennas, all of which we call “microcell”).

In the more recently developed areas of the County, where electric

Madeira DAS System, cont.

and all other distribution lines are underground, the industry seeks to install microcell on new small cell towers along residential streets and roads. In some cases, they propose to replace the 14' street lamps and attach street lighting on these cell towers. In 2016, County staff anticipated as many as 700 applications for DAS or other microcell antenna installations.

Many of these applications have already been submitted, particularly in Germantown and North Potomac. Some have already been “recommended” by the Tower Committee, but not yet built or subject to conditional use hearings. Most appear to be “pending” or otherwise awaiting the passage of a new ZTA. The ZTA that has been requested by the industry, preliminary drafts of which

have been shared by the County Executive’s staff, would provide a microcell application process that is even more favorable to the industry than current regulations. It would eliminate some existing requirements, inadequate as they may be, for public notice and public hearings and would diminish transparency.

The errors listed above from improperly vetted poles and inadequate interdepartmental verification represented about 30% of those poles we researched in the Madeira, Norbeck, and North Potomac DAS networks.

One can only imagine the chaotic sequence of evaluations and installations, in which approximately 700 nearly simultaneous site applications promise faster processing and administrative (“by-right”) approvals, under a new ZTA. The County’s challenges in the past six years with a relative handful of DAS

installations clearly demonstrates that we can and should expect a similar if not greater percentage of microcells to be summarily shifted and relocated in the future.

And, unless rules and procedures are enforced, protected, and enhanced, we can expect these microcell sites to be reviewed and green-lighted by County agencies, including DOT, the Tower Committee, and DPS (even if subsequently relocated by the developers) with no meaningful public notice to affected residents, little-if-any opportunities for public input, and minimal transparency.

[Rick Meyer is a member of the Montgomery County Coalition for Control of Cell Towers (MC4T), Board member of the Potomac Crossing Homeowners Association, and a resident of the County since 1980.] ■

Letter to MCCF from MCPS Chief of Staff Henry Johnson About January 8th Meeting

January 26, 2018

Mr. Jim Zepp, President
Montgomery County Civic Federa-
tion, Inc.

Dear Mr. Zepp:

I feel compelled to write to you regarding the meeting on the evening of Monday, January 8, 2018, and the manner in which this event was coordinated, communicated, and presented to members of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc. (MCCF). In August 2017, Ms. Shruti Bhatnagar approached me about the possibility of Dr. Jack R. Smith, superintendent of schools, participating in a fiscal year budget conversation with your group. As you heard on the evening of January 8, Dr. Smith does a number of these presentations throughout the budget

season to apprise members of the community of his plans to provide the best educational programs for the students in Montgomery County. In speaking with Ms. Bhatnagar, I mentioned that Dr. Smith would be happy to participate in this discussion. She indicated that no other superintendent in the past was willing to meet with your group, an indication of Dr. Smith's desire to be open and transparent when discussion fiscal issues that affect the residents of Montgomery County.

On December 18, 2017, we confirmed Dr. Smith's attendance and participation in your program, "MCPS' Recommended FY2019 Operating Budget: What's In It?" We also were told that Mrs. Joan Fidler, president, Montgomery County Taxpayers League, would

also be present. At no time, either in August 2017 or December 2017, were we told of other topics on the agenda that Dr. Smith would need to respond to.

On January 8, we found out that the Parent's Coalition of Montgomery County sent out a flyer to community members advertising the event as an opportunity for participants to question the superintendent on issues like "the cover up of child sex abuse in Montgomery County Public Schools and the MCPS Synthetic Turf Fraud Cover Up." Several of the vocal audience members present on that evening indicated that a resolution was passed by the MCCF in December 2017 and sent to the superintendent after its passage. It is disappointing that the superintendent was not

MCPS/MCCF Letters, cont.

granted the professional courtesy of being notified, in advance, that MCCF's resolution on child abuse secrecy and artificial turf were on the agenda. Consequently, Dr. Smith did not bring the associated data, information, and/or staff to address the concerns and questions and rightfully did not respond to the resolution.

It is the common practice of Dr. Smith to be transparent and to provide the citizens of Montgomery County with data and information that are important to the academic needs and safety and security of our students. It is unfortunate that the event on January 8 did not meet the spirit of cooperation and collaboration. that Dr. Smith and Montgomery County Public Schools expected of this partnership. I am extremely disappointed that Dr.

Smith was treated so disrespectfully by audience participants, who were misguided about the approved agenda for the meeting. In fairness to the superintendent, the MCCF leadership should have interceded and accepted responsibility for not informing the superintendent of the alternative agenda.

Montgomery County Public Schools and Dr. Smith remain committed to being transparent and open in communicating with our school and community partners, which is essential to the program of our students. We update the Board of Education on numerous topics throughout the year, including some of the topics/issues raised on January 8. We have updated our website to provide the information that was addressed in the resolution. This is the link ([http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseand-](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseand-neglect/)

[neglect/](#)) to the website where the information related to the resolution can be found. Please send this link to your membership so that they may have access to the information as promised.

I appreciate you providing Dr. Smith the opportunity to speak with your membership and share with them his vision for the future of students in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,
Henry R. Johnson, Jr., Ed.D.
Chief of Staff

MCCF RESPONSE

Dear Dr. Johnson,

I feel compelled to write to you regarding your statements in the letter dated January 26th, 2018, addressed to Mr. Jim Zepp, President of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, in order of appearance:

MCPS/MCCF Letters, cont.

While not quite as old as Montgomery's first public schools, MCCF, Inc., has been around since 1925, so I can assure you that superintendents spanning nearly a century have indeed attended our General Sessions before Superintendent Smith's January visit to our 891st general session.

Your assertion that *"At no time, either in August 2017 or December 2017, were we told of other topics on the agenda"* is verifiably untrue. On December 18th, Superintendent Jack R. Smith, Ph.D. received an e-mail (attached) from the Civic Federation with a copy of the December 11th unanimous resolution on the lack of transparency and accountability following the repeated failures of principals and top Montgomery County Public School administrators to report child sexual abuse of students

by MCPS staff to the proper authorities—Child Protective Services and the Montgomery County Police Department—as mandated by state law. Our e-mail informed Superintendent Smith in no uncertain terms that, *"We look forward to your response to this resolution when you visit us on January 8th for our annual Education Program."* Furthermore, the e-mail copied Board of Education staff, and each Board of Education member and County Council members individually. Moreover, a copy of the resolution was e-mailed to the Superintendent's Administrative Services Manager Sandra L. Napoli before our January session (attached).

We are unaware of any *"flyer to community members advertising the event as an opportunity for participants to question the Superintendent on issues like 'the cover up of child sex abuse in Montgomery County*

Public Schools and the MCPS Synthetic Turf Fraud Cover Up." The Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County did advertise the event, rightfully expecting the Superintendent's response to the Federation's resolution, but the graphic used in that case makes no mention of the MCPS synthetic turf fraud problem (attached). Please forward a copy of the flyer you referenced.

It is hard to imagine how MCPS could be ignorant of these issues and their financial ramifications, crucial to any honest and transparent discussion of the MCPS budget to which the Superintendent was invited to participate. MCPS spent untold millions on settlements for lawsuits over child sexual abuse by MCPS teachers and staff. The problem with failure to report incidents to Child Protective Services and local police as mandated by

MCPS/MCCF Letters, cont.

state law could be as bad as the Penn State child sexual abuse cover-up. The Catholic Church's sexual abuse scandal resulted in numerous Arch-dioceses around the nation declaring bankruptcy, but MCPS does not have that luxury and is leaving the taxpayer stuck with the legal costs.

Similarly, MCPS spent millions on defective synthetic turf playing fields containing lead and twelve known human carcinogens, knew that the fields could be dangerous, allowed MCPS students to use the fields after knowing for a fact that fields are defective and dangerous, and allowed the field warranties to expire without filing warranty claims. MCPS continues to use these toxic fields to this day, thereby exposing Montgomery County taxpayers to millions more in legal liabilities after [an admission in](#)

[writing](#) that you don't have any prior records of required annual concussion safety tests. How much does MCPS have budgeted for these legal liabilities? Please provide us with data on this question.

Questions about these two issues have been raised with MCPS by activists for years, with no meaningful response forthcoming to date. Frankly, your claims of MCPS ignorance strain credulity, and we are disappointed you chose to complain that the Federation "*did not meet the spirit of cooperation and collaboration expected of this partnership*" instead of providing a substantive response to these issues. Nothing in the link you provided answers any of our questions. We had hoped MCPS would release the data we requested along with a strong statement reassuring parents and students that MCPS will protect students and whistleblowers,

and further announcing "zero-tolerance" for covering up child sexual abuse and harassment. Child sexual harassment is, after all, child sexual abuse.

Nonetheless, in the true spirit of cooperation and collaboration, we are hereby extending an olive branch to Superintendent Smith by again inviting him to meaningfully address our concerns at the Civic Federation's 892nd General Session on February 12th, 7:45 p.m., featuring our annual program on transparency and accountability in Montgomery County government. We would also like to offer a future MCCF program entirely dedicated to the issue of child sexual abuse/harassment in Montgomery County schools. This would provide the opportunity for an in-depth discussion with a panel of subject matter experts, MCPS, MCCF delegates,

Minutes of MCCF General Meeting #891 Held January 8, 2018, in Rockville

By Bailey Condrey and Danila Sheveiko, First and Second Vice Presidents

Call to Order: President Jim Zepp called the 891st session to order at 7:55 p.m. Introductions followed.

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

Minutes: The December 11th, 2017, general meeting minutes were approved by affirmation.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jerry Garson reported on income and expenses and a bank balance of \$11,283.46. Copies of the Treasurer's report are available upon request.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Oral arguments in Costco Wholesale Corporation vs. Montgomery County at the Maryland Court of Special Appeals **took place on January 9th, 2017**. There's no verdict yet.

PROGRAM

Superintendent Jack R. Smith gave an overview presentation on the basics of Montgomery County demographics, socioeconomics, and the **Montgomery County Public Schools FY2019 operating budget**. Joan Fidler, President of the Montgomery County Taxpayers League, **discussed in detail the lack of MCPS budgetary metrics and compared MCPS performance statistics** with that of adjacent jurisdictions in the D.C. metro region.

The request for increase above

Maintenance of Effort has no academic targets. MoE is the exact opposite of zero-based budgeting and guarantees funding regardless of performance, does not incentivize efficiency and cost-savings, and is a **cost-plus contract**.

How do we know if MCPS pro-

MORE

MCPS/MCCF Letters, cont.

students, and parents.

Please let us know if you will be attending on February 12 as well as your willingness to come back for a future program on child sexual abuse/harassment.

Sincerely,
Bailey Condrey
1st Vice President ■

January Minutes, cont.

grams are succeeding? The Superintendent did not respond to the Federation's **December resolution on the lack of transparency** and accountability surrounding the growing MCPS child sex abuse scandal. Dr. Smith and his Chief of Staff Dr. Johnson left the meeting early, before Q&A started, and **refused to answer any budget-related questions from Delegates** and from the distraught Cloverly Elementary parents that pursued the escaping MCPS officials into the hallway **with TV cameras rolling**. One of the parents, Ms. Quintero, said that we have failed as a community when we cannot take care of our own children.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation

■ Montgomery County continues

to spend money promoting and advertising the new **Bus Rapid Transit system**, but has yet to unveil the details of how it is going to be funded.

OLD BUSINESS

■ The February MCCF general session will be held at the same location: County Executive Office Building Lobby Auditorium in Rockville, 101 Monroe Street.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approx. 9:50 p.m. ■

Montgomery County Civic Federation

www.montgomerycivic.org

info AT montgomerycivic.org

Twitter Feed @mcciviefed

[MCCF Facebook Page](#)

cfn

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

Submit contributions for the next issue by the 26th of the current month. Send to CFN at civicfednews@montgomerycivic.org.

Send all address corrections to membership AT montgomerycivic.org.

VIEW PAST ISSUES ONLINE [HERE](#)