

Former Silver Spring Library Presentations
Comments Received by the Montgomery County Department of General Services

I enjoyed the two presentations at the Civic Center last night, although I preferred the second one (senior housing). One of the things I liked about that plan was the provision of two meeting rooms accessible to the outside. Silver Spring already has a meeting room crisis [the new library is not helping] and it's most important to the community that there be meeting rooms that can be reserved by groups of all kinds. The Quakers in Philadelphia guaranteed themselves a place in heaven when they included free meeting rooms of all sizes when they renovated their old Meeting House.

Walter E.

Dear Sirs,

I vastly prefer the Gudelsky-Centronia proposal after attending the October 4 meeting! The Victoria Housing building looks like a huge fortress. It reminds me of the horrible former Wheaton library.

Regards,
Beverly M.

Good morning,

I was unable to attend last night's meeting, but I'm very interested in the two proposals that you've posted online for the old Silver Spring library site.

I have to say that I'm disappointed in both proposals. The site is next door to a 12-story apartment building, only a few blocks from the Silver Spring metro, near fantastic amenities in downtown Silver Spring, and on a major road. To build only a 4-story building with 92 units, or even worse to limit the redevelopment to a single-use low-rise child care center, is a waste. To put 92 surface parking spaces on a site with 92 units of mostly affordable senior housing that is well-served by bus lines and a few blocks from the Metro is also a waste. My understanding is that car ownership rates among low-income seniors are relatively low, and the site is just down the street from a large public garage for any childcare staff who choose to drive.

Given the apartment building next door, the height of the townhouses across the street that are built into the hill, and the height of other nearby buildings (the apartments at Cedar & Ellsworth, the apartments on the NW corner of Colesville & Spring) the site could easily accommodate a 6-8 story building without impact to the character of the neighborhood. This would provide dozens of additional units of desperately needed housing over the current proposals, or additional space for community amenities or offices. Given the location and the type of housing planned, no additional parking beyond the 92 already proposed spaces should be needed.

If an expanded plan is infeasible, then I would much rather see the Spring House plan than one that provides no additional housing at all. I also strongly support the child care use that's in both proposals. I have two young children and am well aware of the need for additional options in the area, especially if they can provide affordable child care for those who are unable to spend nearly double their mortgage on daycare the way I do.

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For what it's worth, I live in the single family neighborhood just down the street. I imagine that comments from those of my neighbors who dislike any change or additional development will be plentiful, but please know that they do not speak for the entire neighborhood. Some of us chose to live in the area because of its proximity to the urban downtown, and recognize the potential for denser development on the site to add badly needed housing for some lower-income members of our community.

Sincerely,
Catherine V.

My wife and I attended last night's presentation of the two proposals by both teams and would like to offer the following observations:

1. The proposals are have very different goals and is hard to compare them in the same plane.
2. The Children's Day Care center proposal appears to have the best approach to the site. It is the least disruptive of the overall environment and has the strongest purpose/concept basis. It's main weakness is the insufficient response to the elderly housing component/requirement. That might be solved by negotiating a higher level of units than the proposed 15.
3. The housing block proposal looks far weaker in many respects. This building is bulky and does not fit well in the site. The presentation cleverly avoided showing the looming apartment building next door, and the overwhelming site coverage that will greatly disrupt the existing environment. It also misses an opportunity to express the strong potential of an Architectural Statement that does not try to cow-tow to the surrounding housing stock. The building "front" looks at a 12 story mediocrity. What a sad view for the apartment dwellers. Furthermore, how can this outfit function well with so little parking and so many site circulation problems that its many distinct functions bring up? We also think that the undefined daycare space size and location appears to be another problem. And why does it show a courtyard in the north side where the sun exposure is nonexistent?

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to express our thoughts. We hope that the Day Care solution gets serious and positive consideration. Missing that, we hope that the Housing proposal gets a strong critical review.

Tad G.

Hello,

My name is Marciela D. and I'm a resident of the Seven Oaks-Evanswood neighborhood. I want to thank you for putting together an excellent forum yesterday on the old Silver spring library project. Both teams had good presentations and ideas. I wanted to provide some input as a younger (32) homeowner in the area and why I think the first proposal is a better fit for the neighborhood and for the Silver Spring community as a whole.

1st proposal (Martha Gudelesky Center)

· This proposal was excellent and well thought out. It seemed that the community would be able to use much of the space of the center both indoors and outdoors making it not just a building in our community but a real community member.

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- Affordable **early childcare** is a critical need! As a young woman who will not get any paid maternity leave from my job, finding infant care is essential and very difficult in our area. This is even more critical for low-income working families. I was heartened to see this center would incorporate infant care and have 125-150 slots for that.
- The commitment to repurposing the old building and sustainable materials for the new portion is environmentally friendly and cost-effective
- The lack of need for external funding or large zoning changes means this project could happen quickly and minimize current community disruption.
- The lack of senior housing on site was not ideal but the commitment to fund affordable housing in a block in the more immediate downtown community might be better for seniors with quicker access to restaurants, pharmacies, and transit.

2nd proposal (Victory Housing)

- It was great that this group would provide a high level of affordable senior housing on site. One thing that was unclear was what would happen if seniors did need to transition to assisted living eventually - would they be kicked out of this building at that time? Would there be resources to help them?
- It was disappointing to see the limited places that the community would get to interact with this formerly public space. The group referred to a "terrace" outside and one amenity room, but that really means quite a lot of loss of currently public use land for the community.
- The lack of early childcare/infant care is disappointing. Families need care for infants often starting as young as 6 weeks, and this childcare facility will not address that need for young families. MoCo wants young families to move to and remain in the county, but without adequate infant care in metro accessible areas, it's easier and more cost-effective to move further out.
- The lack of details on space for the children was concerning and made me feel the childcare portion was not well-thought out. The proposer described children using Ellsworth Urban Park as a play area which really isn't ideal. It seemed that perhaps the group would "figure out details later" but that could greatly affect the quality of the child care.
- The number of parking spaces seems inadequate if each resident will be given a parking space (staff for the childcare center, community members using the dog park and Ellsworth urban park, parking for childcare pickup/dropoff etc.)
- The need for zoning changes will likely make this project progress slower and creates some additional risk

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and I hope you continue engaging with the residents of the nearby community as well as the larger Silver Spring community throughout this process.

Marciela D.

Greetings,

I just want to say I was impressed with both presentations the other night. Although both proposals have attractive aspects, the first one, the Martha B. Gudelsky child development center, is the one I would love to see built. The Millennials, our largest generation of Americans, are starting their families and will continue to have children for the next 15 years. Millennials also love urban environments like downtown Silver Spring, with its transit options and proximity to restaurants and entertainment. I think providing a quality child development center for children ages 0-5 is a fantastic idea to attract this

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generation and encourage them to call Silver Spring home. They will find the area an attractive place to live and work. Having a child development center with outdoor green space is the perfect addition to downtown and is a fabulous way to honor the former library site. In addition, Montgomery County won't need to lend any money to make the center a reality.

I strongly hope that you choose to award the contract for the Martha Gudelsky child development center. This center would be a huge asset to our neighborhood.

Thank you,
Denise P.

Hello,

I live in the Chelsea Heights community and have a strong opinion about the 2 proposals for the old library site.

I am opposed to the Victoria Housing proposal. The building will be much too high and will eat up too much green space with its parking lot. It will ruin the view from numerous residences in my community. The beauty of the park will also be diminished as it will be dwarfed by this huge building. The building will simply be too large for this area to maintain a "neighborhood" feel. As a homeowner, I also worry that 72 subsidized housing units will have a negative impact on property values.

The MBGD CD project on the other hand will provide a much more neighborhood-friendly space, use only their own funding sources, and maintain the integrity of the original building.

If I have a say, I vote for MBGD CD!

Thank you,
Karen W.

Hello,

I am a Silver Spring resident and appreciated hearing about the two proposals for the former Silver Spring library site.

I'd like to express my concern regarding the Spring House by Victory Housing. I live across the street in the new Chelsea Heights Townhomes and a few things spring to mind about this proposal:

1) The proposal, while ambitious and thoughtful, appears to try to do too much in an extremely small space. It's like fitting the furniture from a three bedroom home into a studio apartment. I believe the construction of such a space (which includes demolition of the current library) will not only take a much, much longer time than the other proposal, but will create a lot of air pollution due to the tearing down of the building. I can see the library from my home (I'm literally right across the street) and am extremely concerned about this.

2) The addition of all of the new residents poses several concerns:

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A) There are exclusively one-way streets on Ellsworth which will make traffic difficult not only during rush hour (with the dropping off and picking up of children) but pretty much all the time. I'm not sure those small one-way streets can accommodate all of that additional traffic.

B) The new residences will need to be hooked up to the water/sewer system. When I moved in across the street, I was told I'd have to pay over \$1,000 a year for the next 20 years to cover the cost. Since these apartments are all affordable housing, will the costs be taken on by Montgomery County (and passed to the tax payers)? Also, with all of the additional homes plugged into the water/sewer system, I would think that would create additional wear and tear on the system, potentially resulting in problems and extra costs for those already in the neighborhood.

C) The proposed childcare center is not creating any outdoor space for the children and they will all be using the park nearby. This seems like the city/taxpayers are subsidizing the daycare center. Additionally, I found it troubling that the builders implied they would seek to expand their space into the nearby dog park for parking of other needed space. The current residents enjoy utilizing the space as it is.

D) Visitors to the residents of the homes will need to park on the street and there is already extremely limited street parking in that area.

E) While the homes are set to be, primarily, for low-income elderly persons, who is to say that children and grandchildren - entire families - will move into these apartments? Will there be reviews to ensure only a certain number of people per apartment? Or could one person move in, and then many other family members move in to join them? If there are 92 units, that could translate into hundreds of additional people in that small area.

3) This proposal appears that it will have a much higher cost on Montgomery County taxpayers than the day-care center. Additionally, not all Montgomery County taxpayers contribute equally - the people who live in the 4-5-year-old new housing development near the Forest Glen Metro (where there was a mansion that was torn down and turned into about 10-12 homes) pay significantly less taxes than I do, because they have not been reassessed yet - and there homes are much bigger and likely worth the same or more as my home.)

The only drawback of the Martha Guldesky childcare center is the increased traffic during rush hour - but it will probably be about the same as the Communikids daycare. I believe the Martha Guldesky center will be of great value to the neighborhood and others, and will be an asset to the immediate and further-out neighborhood. Spring House appears to be too ambitious and will cause great harm to those living near by.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Kind Regards,
Lillian W.

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October 12, 2017

Division of General Services, Office of the County Executive, Montgomery County, Maryland

I attended the October 4, 2017 DGS-sponsored Re-Use of Former Silver Spring Library 'Proposals Comparison Event' at Silver Spring Civic Building. Here are my Comments:

1. Two proposals presented were: Spring House/Victory Housing Proposal to build a new Senior's apartment house plus a ground-level child care/education center; Proposal by the Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center, Inc. for an Early Child Care/Development Center to be operated by CentroNia on this site, and affordable Senior rental housing elsewhere in downtown Silver Spring. These were the top two Proposals submitted in response to a Department of General Services RFP for an appropriate Re-development Design/Build/Operate project on Site of the Former Silver Spring Public Library between Colesville Road and Ellsworth Ave., Silver Spring, MD.

Both proposals aimed to fulfill the requirements of the DGS Request for Proposals:

1) provide 15 units of affordable Senior Housing in downtown Silver Spring area;
2) construct an Early Child-Care facility on-site with a qualified Child Care Provider organization to operate it. These two 'land re-use' proposals were intended to make the best possible use of the former Silver Spring Library site, including preservation of the Library's Mid-Century architectural characteristics and existing Green space at this valuable Site - stipulated at No Capital Cost to Montgomery County Government.

2. One of these Proposals - the Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center, Inc. & CentroNia was thoroughly prepared, presenting a clearly thought-out design that demonstrated preservation of Green Space and the Library's architectural features. It offers a financially sound (private foundation) source of funding "at no capital cost to Montgomery County Government". This proposal is to create a highly qualified child care/development facility re-utilizing the former Library building, and subsidize rentals for 15 affordable Senior apartment units elsewhere in 'downtown' Silver Spring.

The Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center, Inc. & CentroNia proposal is the better of the two. It is the only proposal that meets and exceeds the key requirements in the DGS RFP. The Gudelsky proposal for this Site provides a garden space and an on-site early-childhood outdoor playground. It offers affordable care services to the largest number of young children (120-150). It promises a very generous financial support commitment by the Martha B. Gudelsky Foundation for design/construction of an innovative, site-suitable Child Care Center. It also offers public use of parts of the child care facility on Week-Ends and after-hours on week-days. Funding is to be guaranteed for all construction, to subsidize the child care operations, and for 15 affordable Senior Apartments elsewhere in Silver Spring CBD. Together, this makes the Gudelsky proposal a superlative offer. I strongly recommend that Montgomery County Government select the 'Gudelsky/CentroNia' proposal.

The Spring House/Victory House proposal meets minimal requirements of the RFP, but does not compare qualitatively or operationally to the Gudelsky proposal. The Spring House proposal is for a single large Senior housing apartment building with 94 small and mid-sized apartments including 15 affordable rental apartments. The new Senior apartment building is substantial, but a small ground floor child care facility serving up to 80 children is less adequate. The Spring House pre-school Child Care Provider is focused on teaching foreign languages rather than on early childhood development; it does not compare in breadth or depth to CentroNia, a recognized Metro-area early Child-care/Child Development provider for ages 0 - 5 young/pre-school child care; it is designed to serve nearly twice as

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many children as the Spring House proposal. The Gudelsky/CentroNia Child Care/Child Development proposal would provide quality early child care that far outshines that of the Spring House/Victory House proposal.

Remarkably, the Gudelsky proposal fully funds ALL site preparation and building capital costs for this project without recourse to grants or loans from Montgomery County or the State of Maryland, and subsidizes early child care operations to make them more affordable. This gives the Gudelsky proposal a strong financial advantage. A less valuable, but adequate component is Gudelsky's offer to fully subsidize 15 Senior rental apartments in Silver Spring. The Spring House proposal depends heavily on anticipated receipt of County and State government grants and loans, along with yet to be arranged 'for-profit' private capital investment. It appears to lack required financial cost details for the project's capital costs and operating costs, and does not specify how affordability of Child Care and Senior Housing costs will actually be met.

Timing and Environment: near-term availability of an operating facility favors the Gudelsky proposal. Its Architectural design, permitting, construction time-line is scheduled for completion of an early child-care/development center on the former Library site within a two-year period, including the renovation and preservation of the existing Mid-Century style former Silver Spring Library/grounds. This proposal includes a minimum of surface parking area for a very limited number of vehicles with controlled vehicular access from Ellsworth Ave., a County street. Construction is designed to use 'Green' building techniques and materials. In contrast, the Spring House proposal appears to take up to four years to complete construction and includes some questionable contingencies that may require even more time to reach final completion and operational status, with less usable space for early child care.

Spring House proposes a much larger building footprint than the Gudelsky proposal. This requires razing the former Silver Spring Library entirely to construct a new apartment building twice as high as the Gudelsky building, with no clear commitment to using 'Green' construction methods. The Spring House proposal has large amounts of paved parking space and a two-way paved private street accessible from Colesville Road, a very congested urban-area State Highway - creating a difficult entrance/exit. The Spring House proposal would result in much less green-space/outdoor child-care facilities than the Gudelsky proposal; far too much Spring House ground-level square footage is for motorized vehicles, resulting in more traffic congestion and pollution.

4. I am a long-time Silver Spring resident (graduate of Montgomery Blair High School) and a Senior citizen not seeking affordable housing or early child care. I am also a Behavioral Science researcher (retired) specialized in understanding needs of families with small children. My adult son and his family own and occupy a home adjacent to the former Silver Spring Library (on Noyes Drive in Woodside Park).

I judge the Gudelsky proposal as best-suited to the scale and expectations of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. I view the Gudelsky proposal as the best available, most innovative and affordable facility/program for early child care at the former Silver Spring Library site. Pre-school child care is a seriously under-served need identified by Montgomery County Government, and the highest priority issue for Montgomery Moving Forward - in which I participate. I also advocate more, especially more affordable, Senior rental housing in the Silver Spring CBD. It is not essential that such Senior Housing be sited on the grounds of the former Silver Spring Library.

I strongly recommend DGS select the Martha B. Gudelsky, Inc./CentroNia proposal for the formerly Silver Spring Library site. Montgomery County government should initiate final negotiations to contract with Gudelsky/CentroNia representatives for this facility including a legally enforceable written

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commitment from Gudelsky/CentroNia to fulfill 'No Capital Costs to the County' in the RFP, including: subsidies for affordable Senior housing and for income-qualified families of pre-school children selected to attend.

I understand that this full-funding commitment will be from the Gudelsky Foundation.

Joel T.

Thank you for organizing the informative meeting on the two finalists for the old SS library use the other night. The most important question for me on redevelopment of these taxpayer owned parcels is, will the Mr. Leggett opt to sell the land to the developer or will it lease the land? And what is the process for each of these choices?

I urge the County Executive to retain ownership of our land. Right now, priorities may be senior affordable housing and day care. But 20 years from now, the priority might actually be parks and green natural space, community gardens, a school, or a health clinic. Also, if the County (and taxpayers) maintain control of the land, we are in a stronger position to shape the development and uses, especially with regards to open space, traffic circulation, pedestrian safety, parking and transit access options, and accessible services for different income levels.

Could you outline the decision making process on the old SS library reuse, or direct the community to where the processes are spelled out? It seems a bit of a black box. Understanding the process will help guide community discussion and decision making.

Jean C.

As a 23-year resident of the SOECA neighborhood in Woodside, I greatly prefer the Gudelsky Child Development Center proposal for this area. Our area is residential in nature, and it is crucial to honor the mostly single-family home residential character of our community. This proposal is a better fit with the neighborhood, provides more desperately-needed green space, keeps and refurbishes the existing low-rise buildings, and still meets key service needs by providing early-development child care. The Victory Housing proposal is too large, creates another monolithic building in an area that already has way too many high-rise apartment and condo buildings, and totally fails to fit into the residential profile of our historic neighborhood.

Thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

Joseph G.

I live just two blocks from the former Silver Spring Library and have reviewed both proposals you are considering for redevelopment of that site. While both have strengths and weaknesses I support the Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center & CentroNia proposal. This proposal makes the best use of the existing building, respects the character of the surrounding neighborhood, provides a vital and much-needed service in the DTSS area, and meets the County's goal of providing new affordable living spaces for senior citizens.

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The County should negotiate to increase the number of affordable apartments made available to senior citizens under this proposal. The child care center proposes to use Ellsworth Urban Park as its playground. This is a huge benefit to the center as it will not have to purchase land and equipment for a private playground. The County should receive significant consideration for this benefit. In addition, the County should seek assurances that the center's use of this park will not interfere with use by neighborhood children and other visitors to the park. It would be good to know what improvements/enhancements/changes will need to be made to the park to make it suitable as a playground for a child care center.

As plans for the child care center are developed in more detail, attention should be paid to the amount of parking proposed on the site as neighborhood streets already accommodate the cars of residents, users of Ellsworth Urban Park and Dog Park, and visitors to downtown Silver Spring.

Thank you,
Kristen C.

Dear DGS, County Executive Leggett, and David Dise;

Thank you for sharing with the public and soliciting our thoughts and feedback on proposals for reuse of the public land at the Silver Spring Library site.

I support 100%

#1, which trumps all points > that the library land, both parcels, MUST remain owned by the Public> into perpetuity.

-- that the land management and the historic building and the building use be transferred to the Parks Department, (and Rec Dept to manage programs)

-- that the Master Plan and PROS plans, as promissory notes to the public, dictate that land disposition should remain public, and the sale of this land to another owner violates the public trust.

-- that the residents of downtown , with exploding population, need public land larger pocket parks and green spaces, and we should not sell public land to build more cement.

and, I strongly disagree that the library lands (2 parcels) be disposed of. This public land should NEVER be sold to a private entity.

With that said, secondarily, what I like about the Gudelsky proposal:

-- the building visually and conceptually as presented > in size and scale is good. There is a good balance of building mass and limited expansion of the built footprint.

--It keeps the historic library> excellent!

--it maintains the current building footprint, and maximizes /keeps the sorely needed outdoor open and green space> environmentally very good.

--I like that the Guldesky's are from Silver Spring, my daughter is the 4th generation of my family to live in the neighborhood. My grandfather also designed Silver Spring churches, schools, and community spaces, and public housing. His was a voice of reasonable development when Silver Spring was THE first Suburb. These kinds of family legacies are good things and keep a part of the old with the new.

However I don't agree that the Guldesky's take ownership of this public land. I like that they have a good sense of why this library site means so much to the community, long time residents and

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newcomers, who live here, and am excited their Foundation's proposal reflects this same community vision.

The proposed building Use:

-- childcare is ok, although what the community wants and needs and lacks and has asked for for 5+ years, is a teen center in the library building, with indoor and outdoor spaces (as the 5-year old teen charrette so carefully dictated) Of course the community agreed some child care and senior care could co-habitat, with different hours or rooms set aside for the different ages, and/or overlapping such as seniors reading to small children during the day, and teens having a place to play ping pong or volleyball, or watch movies or do art, or hang out and talk indoors after school or evenings or weekends, or a teen teaching a senior how to use social media! :).

What I don't like about the Gudelsky proposal:

-- **Car TRAFFIC** and ingress/egress

150 children - is A LOT, and would generate traffic for a small school, and would generate traffic inside the neighborhood from 7-10 am and 3-7 pm. **Unless it is contained to Colesville Road, and Cedar Street.** The site visitors **MUST** not have access on Ellsworth Drive from Dale. Otherwise, the County and developer need to allocate thousands of dollars to mitigate safety on Ellsworth Drive. The street will need lighting, sidewalks the entire length of Ellsworth (Cedar to Dale) and on both sides of the street. The road will need car lanes and bike lanes, and safety and noise mitigation. This street needs to remain a safe, walkable, quiet street. The street is the MAIN pedestrian pathway for hundreds of people that live in downtown silver Spring and the surrounding 1 mile radius! There are walkers, strollers, bikers, of all ages. More cars won't mix well. Ellsworth is now our entire neighborhoods MAIN Street. Downtown residents, Chelsea Heights residents, bike riders, bike commuters, families all use it as THE pedestrian access route.

--Retaining the SOECA Neighborhood Traffic Protection Plan. In addition to funding extensive mitigation on Ellsworth, The SOECA neighborhood has strict existing Traffic Restrictions and must be maintained as the legal promises for the last 20+ years.

-- I could not find any track records for the Gudelsky Foundation running a day care center, its seems this might be their first shot at such an endeavor. This is worrisome. Is this a long term 20-30 year proposal? or a test run for a few years.

I do not like the Victory Housing proposal

--The footprint is way to large, it envelopes the entire acreage (or almost all of it) and leaves little to NO green or open space,

--It adds more cars and even more parking spaces

--the design is boring, milk-toast and generic, and is disrespectful and does not integrate the historic library design.

Frankly, Senior Housing and the Victory Housing proposal belongs should be placed and integrated into the new Gudelsky White Oak project development. This land is wide open has hundreds of thousands of acres, it will be on a transit line, and would be much more suitable, have more 'air and outdoor space, and access to shops.

Kathleen S.

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If you must choose between the two finalists presented at the Oct 4th presentation, please choose the **Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center & Centronia**. I am a father of two and live on Mayfair Place, a block from the cite where this is planned. The current park is already overcrowded due to the significant increase in population density in the immediate neighborhood without any increase in available park space. This space presents a golden opportunity to increase the size of the current park on adjacent property already owned by the county for the enjoyment of all as detailed to the master plan. We should stick with the master plan, but the Martha B Gudelsky Child Decelopment Center & Centronia appears to a reasonable compromise if you take some of that parking lot, which is never fully utilized, and incorporate it into the current park.

Sincerely,
Robert S.

More Children, More Grass, NOT more apartments.

SS is already fast approaching over-supply for the market.... and rents will become lower to reflect that oversupply.

SS has long paved over with waaay too much concrete, left far to little grass, and a resulting a dearth of decent playgrounds. For heavens sake, go with the children's center, keep the footprint, keep the "low rise" as it meets the neighborhood, and allow a dedicated, controlled playground for the children... NOT forcing them to play in the DOG PARK!

LuAnn M.

Yo soy parte de la familia de Centronia ,madre de dos niños prescolares y quiero solicitar se tenga en cuenta la prioridad para que centroNia , pueda obtener la biblioteca de silver spring y así ofrecer más servicios a las familias de montgomery county. Agradeciendo su atención

Jovita H.

Hi,

I would like to express my support for the proposal to do a childcare center in the location of the former Silver Spring Library on Colesville Road. I think keeping most of the current structure in place and using the surrounding areas as green spaces for the children makes most sense in a downtown area that's much too quickly becoming too crowded.

Thank you
Chantal R.

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I am a teacher at CentroNia Learning Center, and a resident of Silver Spring MD. and on behalf of our diverse community I am confident that the department of General Services, take into consideration the great need in our community for child care quality for Infants, toddlers and preschoolers. CentroNia will be able to extend these services if this proposal is granted to our community.

Sincerely
Ligia B.

Soy un padre de familia que tengo a mi hijo en centronia, y en lo personal me siento sumamente satisfecho con lo que ellos estan haciendo por mi hijo, me encantaría que ese proyecto siga creciendo por el bienestar de muchos niños como el mio. Por su atencion muchas gracias..

Gabriel G.

Thank you for the recent public meeting related to the old Silver Spring library. I applaud the county for creating the stakeholder process that was used as input into the RFP development and for allowing the community to weigh in on the finalists. Regardless of the final selection, it will be important that the land remains to be owned by the county, to ensure that the proposed design is not swapped out at a later date for a design in which the community is not involved. The county should not transfer ownership of the land to the finalist, as this site has been and should continue to remain a community-focused asset.

Of the two proposals, I am strongly in support of the Gudelsky/Centronia proposal, which was the only one of the two that met all of the RFP objectives (i.e., increase senior housing in the Silver Spring area, contribute to the need for child care services in Montgomery County, no cost to the county, incorporate green space with the neighboring park). By far the Gudelsky/Centronia proposal was the much stronger proposal as it was visionary, beautifully designed, historically consistent with the old library, aligned well with the neighboring park, has no financial impact on the community/state and it will be a facility that Silver Spring can be proud of for generations to come. Instead of trying to cram an average housing concept and average child care center into a small, unsuitable space for both, they made the right decision to focus on the most appropriate design for the location. It is an extremely rare opportunity to have an available site right next to a public park. To propose yet another housing complex in Silver Spring, when there are housing units being developed throughout the downtown area, would be an injustice for the overall community. Gudelsky/Centronia's decision to increase affordable senior housing in the area, but at more suitable locations in the downtown area, shows vision for the community. The proposed design, which is a beautiful architecture that revitalizes the old Silver Spring library, is a nod towards preserving history and creating a facility that is consistent with the neighboring setting. Beyond the beautiful design, there is an award winning child development center proposed with Centronia, which is known widely for their excellent child care services. Not only does the design preserve green space, but it expands publicly available space for the community in their courtyard area. And to reiterate, this proposal will have no financial impact on the community as it is completely funded.

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On the other hand, the Victory Housing proposal only met half of the objectives of the RFP, as there will be an unknown cost to the county/state and they did not incorporate green space that blends with the neighboring park. There were also many issues present with the Victory Housing proposal. The graphics/images were completely deceiving as there were no street names included to provide context, there were missing graphic details surrounding the facility, the park was completely misrepresented and inaccurately portrayed, and likely the proposed design won't fit in the space if they put in a road that has both parking and sufficient space for 2 lanes of driving between Colesville and Ellsworth. Also, it seemed the child care center was an afterthought to the design as the presenters did not even consider where kids would be playing outdoors and during the presentation they stumbled and said they would use the neighboring park, which would raise a very high security risk for the kids. Beyond the design and child care facility problems, they also had a very difficult-to-understand scale of affordability for units, which likely no one would be monitoring, nor enforcing, allowing them to push more units into high-priced market rate units. Finally, they were very vague when it came to the cost of the proposed design and they said they will require financial support from the county/state, which does not meet the RFP objectives. As their design/proposal shows, the old Silver Spring Library space/land is not conducive to both a quality child care center and affordable, high quality housing on the same location, as it is a very small space, not designed for such a concept. Overall the proposal is very deceptive and would not be something that this community would be proud of, as it's just another uninteresting housing unit with a sub-par child care center with no vision.

By leaps and bounds I favor the Gudelsky/Centronia proposal as it meets all objectives of the RFP, namely increasing affordable senior housing, contributing to child care services, incorporating green space with the neighboring park, at no cost to the county and in the end is a beautiful design that this community can take pride in. Clearly there are other more suitable locations (e.g. 2 Bonifant parking garages next to the transit center in downtown Silver Spring recently considered for an arena), that would be a prime location in the heart of services and public transportation, for a large affordable senior housing design. But this location is perfect for a moderately sized, beautiful child development center that revitalizes the old library building, integrates well with the neighboring Ellsworth Park, preserves much needed green space and will provide a high quality child development service for the community.

Regards,
Steve P.

After attending the presentation of the 2 proposals in the SS Civic Center on Oct. 4, and just reviewing the proposals again online at the DGS/OPD website, I feel the Spring House proposal better meets the needs of the county as well as the requirements spelled out in the RFP.

Admittedly, the Gudelsky proposal would create an outstanding childcare center that would serve more children than the Spring House proposal would. However, the Gudelsky proposal to buy or lease only 15

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existing residences elsewhere in Silver Spring and make them affordable doesn't begin to address the need for more senior housing in MoCo.

In contrast to Gudelsky offering only 15 residences at or below 60% of AMI, the Spring House proposal would offer 72 affordable units, with 5 units at or below 30% of AMI; 5 units at or below 40% of AMI; 17 units at or below 50% of AMI and 45 units at or below 60% of AMI. That's an enormous difference. And Spring House would accomplish this in a 4 story building that is attractive, would blend in with the surrounding neighborhoods and also would offer high quality childcare serving 80 to 100 children. The developer and owner of Spring House, Victory Housing, has a proven record with 15 properties in MoCo offering more than 2,000 senior-focused units. The Communikids childcare program it would provide would offer language immersion, which is vitally important for MoCo to be able to assimilate its growing number of residents from different cultures with different languages.

Also, having senior housing located within easy walking distance of downtown Silver Spring would lessen, if not eliminate, the need for most of its residents to own a car. Senior residents of Spring House would be able to easily access and enjoy the benefits of downtown Silver Spring, including shopping, library, culture at AFI and the civic center, restaurants, and transit with bus stops nearby and a Metro station a short walk away too. Spring House would be the epitome of transit-oriented development which we need more of in MoCo.

In summary, the Spring House proposal would better address the need for more affordable senior housing in MoCo, and its location next to downtown Silver Spring is ideal. The childcare program Spring House would offer also sounds great. It's clear to me that Spring House also better meets the requirements spelled out in the RFP.

In closing, it's worth noting that my wife and I live in Woodside Park, which is the neighborhood across Colesville Road from the old SS Library. We think it would be wonderful to have affordable senior housing built so close to us, and would enjoy seeing and interacting with more senior citizens in downtown Silver Spring. The businesses in downtown SS would love it too.

I encourage the County Executive to select the Spring House proposal. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter with me more. I also would be happy to be quoted publicly stating that Spring House would be a wonderful addition to Silver Spring.

Sincerely,
Brian D.

Good afternoon,

My name is Ines O. The reason for this letter is because I want to let you know that CentroNia has been part of my life for 8 years now and I still have a couple more years to go. CentroNia has helped out my family and hundreds of other families and are still helping out families throughout the whole year. I think CentroNia will benefit the community because CentioNia always offers programs for the adults in the families such as workshops, job fairs, health fairs, and many different types of subjects that a family might want some help and guidance with. Centronia has made a huge difference in my children's life as well. Centronia always made sure that my children were either on the level of his age or advanced. If my child was lacking on any subject they would always make sure to have some one on one time with him to get to the level they needed to be in. In general, Centronia has always been there to help out my

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family and my children in any way possible as well as I know they have been there helping other families in the community. I believe opening another CentroNia in our area would be great for the children and the community. CentroNia always makes sure to have father-male involvement with their children and offer many activities throughout the year. If you have any questions feel free to give me a call to 301-283-8906 or contact me via email at isoquendo09@gmail.com Thank you very much !

Sincerely,
Ines O.

Dear DGS,

The rendering for the Victory House proposal does not appear to meet conditional use minimum requirements, specifically in terms of setback, minimum required open space, and minimum square feet per child required for day care. We need to understand better if the minimum requirements are overlapping each other, or how the two conditional uses will be carved out separately and evaluated by a Hearing Examiner.

I also don't believe SHA will allow such a robust access from Colesville Rd where there is no signal to facilitate either vehicular traffic or pedestrians walking with children.

My question is, how could this project be one of the finalists when what would be allowed by a Hearing Examiner may be quite different from the Victory House proposal and rendering, and may affect their business model and borrowing capacity?

Jean C.

Buenos días , yo soy una madre primeriza y mi voto es por Centronia , que nesecitamos ese espacio para nuestros pequeños niños que son nuestro futuro , en mi caso Centronia me ha ayudado a ser una mejor madre para mi hija también me siento muy contenta...

Aurora T.

I attended the presentations and studied the proposals for the 2 groups vying for the former SS Library site. I understand that County Executive Leggett will ultimately choose one of the proposals, so petitioning him with my choice, appears to be my only recourse at this time.

I believe the Gudelsky Child Development Center & CentroNia (G&C) for this site is clearly the best and most exciting proposal. To quote from their overview, their vision is to create a "state of the art early childcare and education center that respects and builds on the history, green space, and residential character of the site."

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The Gudelsky/CentroNia plan retains and “recycles” our Heritage 1957 Rhees Burket Prairie School style architecture of the former SS Library building, which meets several Criteria for Historic Preservation. It is a landmark building for the greater Silver Spring community.

Victory (V) tears down and landfills this important structure. Adaptive reuse, in this case for an excellent purpose, child development, is also environmentally sound. The greenest building is one that already exists. Almost all of the embodied energy of material production and constructing a building is lost when it is destroyed.

The G&C plan retains all the existing green space on the site and has the potential to save all the existing trees surrounding the heritage library building; only constructing a new 2 story addition at the rear, on a portion of the surface parking lot, thus respecting the residential character of the neighborhood.

According to Victory’s complete program submissions, an aerial view of the Library site on page 68 shows Victory’s building superimposed on the property, and very little green space is retained. In fact, under V’s proposal, pavement and impervious surfaces significantly increase and trees and green space dramatically decrease.

This aerial photo and rendering shows Victory’s Spring House built right up against and overshadowing the County’s new Dog Park which precludes saving any of the trees on the north side of the library property.

G&C has the opportunity to incorporate these trees within their extensive designated child playground area. Since the G&C plan saves the former library, all of the mature trees surrounding the structure can be spared.

Gudelsky has the entire existing building of 2 levels and a new light-filled 2-story addition, all devoted to their CentroNia Child Development Center, and will serve up to 70 or more, additional children than Victory’s KinderKids.

KinderKids dedicated space shown on Victory’s Spring House lower level floor plan diagram seems constrained for up to 100 children served. And is this space really 6,000 square feet as mentioned? Their Child Center seems like an afterthought as does their suggested playground, wedged between the dog park and their proposed retaining wall. If this is not feasible KinderKids proposes to use Ellsworth public park for their children’s playground.

The Gudelsky proposal provides subsidies for 15 off-site affordable senior residences in the CBD core nearer to transportation and other amenities in one of the existing or new apartment buildings that will ultimately add another 7,000 residences in Downtown SS. (Incidentally out of this significant number, I suspect there is the opportunity to create many more subsidized senior residences in more advantageous locations for the elderly.) As pointed out, the 15 units satisfies the County’s requirements for a hypothetical on-site 50-unit resident mid-rise with 30 percent affordable senior residents.

The Gudelsky proposal has the opportunity to offer subsidized senior units much sooner since it is possible some of the offsite apartments are already available. Otherwise, according to permitting and construction time lines from the proposers, G&C will take less than 2 years to complete their CentroNia

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project, but V could take up to 3 years to finish their proposed 4-5 story building. This would be after the contract is signed, permitting is satisfied, zoning approval is granted, and after the used-books store returns home to Wheaton to their space in the new Wheaton Library in 2019-2020.

Parking issues: Gudelsky will provide 80 spaces which seem more than adequate for their CentroNia staff, some visiting parent spaces, and Ellsworth Park playground and dog park patrons.

Victory states it is providing 92 spaces, but this is not apparent from the aerial view. Their retaining wall on the northeast side of their building jutting out from the KinderKids room removes 8 spaces, and because of shadows on its rendering, the number of parallel parking spaces on their proposed 3-lane access road, which seems problematic in itself, on the south side, are obscured. Even if true, this number of parking spaces seems inadequate for their projected 92 senior residences, KinderKids staff, Ellsworth Park and dog park visitors.

Other major benefits of the Gudelsky proposal include importantly, as the County requires, that "Mo Co will bear no costs of capital." CentroNia also creates approximately 50 new full and part-time jobs. Community activists in the immediate neighborhood have encouraged me to recommend that the land be leased, not sold, so it can be returned to the County, and remain in the public domain, and under public control. This is what Gudelsky states in an email they desire.

George F.

Gudelsky Foundation Proposal is an elegantly designed light-filled vision incorporating leading architect, civic leader, S.S. resident Rhees Evans Burket's Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired Library. This Proposal respects and is sensitive to the integrity of our Library, its intact green rolling land, and the neighborhoods! Davis Carter Scott's design resonates with the "organic modernism" theme of "bringing the outside inside." Its heart and soul is the multi-cultural Child Development Center to be operated by CentroNia, child care experts, and includes community space. Affordable Senior apartments will be provided advantageously in the CBD. Gudelsky Foundation fully funds capital developmental costs for the whole endeavor! Their responsive Proposal allows a treasured public structure and its land to continue to serve the Public.

The Silver Spring Historical Society applauds and supports the Gudelsky Proposal!

Marcie Stickle, SSHS Advocacy Chair, 301-585-3817, 8515 Greenwood, S.S. 20912

Historical/Architectural/Adaptive Reuse/Bio Info:

<http://www.preservationdirectory.com/PreservationBlogs/ArticleDetail.aspx?id=4979&catid=1>

Burket's Silver Spring Library, Wright-Inspired: Adaptive Reuse, Stand Alone, Sensitive Incorporation Into New Development to Protect, Preserve, Honor It

Contributed By: Marcia L Stickle Email The Author: marcipro@aol.com

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Adaptive Reuse! Silver Spring Historical Society enthusiastically supports adaptively reusing our former 1957 Silver Spring Library designed by leading Metro D.C. area architect, Mo Co Civic Leader, and Silver Spring resident Rhees Evans Burket, along with its environmental setting and its parking lots of 2.35 acres to continue to serve the community.



Just as it integrates itself into the hilly landscape, it's a perfect fit to serve the community! In "harmony with nature," this "Parkitecture" building and its setting are Burket's legacy gift to Silver Spring and Montgomery County.

One excellent vision for adaptive reuse is as a Children's Center; with immediate access to the adjacent Ellsworth Urban Park and Playground! Kids' Gardens can spring up in the green and treed lawns surrounding Burket's Library. What a hands-on healthy green learning tool for the kids!

Adaptively reusing unique existing community structures preserves OUR Silver Spring's tapestry, unique architecture, our history, our stories, our singular Time Line! Burket notes his S.S. Public Library as a "principal work" in the AIA Directory 1962. The Silver Spring Library was the linchpin of the new County Public Library system established in 1951:

"The formal merger of the S.S. Library and other participating libraries into the County library system took place on July 1, 1951. Takoma Park, Rockville, and Bethesda elected not to join the system initially, although Rockville and Bethesda joined later. The S.S. Library with its two branches and large reference collection, was the linchpin of the new County system.

"A New Library on Colesville Road. The County began planning for a new S.S. Library. Rhees Burket, a local architect, was hired to design the new building. . . . County Library Board unanimously approved the site on Jan. 21, 1954" [Oshel, Bob & Friends of the S.S. Library, "The S.S. Library, 1931-2001: Enriching Lives for 70 Years," P. 8].

Rhees Burket (1899-1963), Silver Spring resident, was a noted architect in the greater D.C. area for his homes, commercial and public buildings, including myriad schools. His Stratford School, Arlington, Va., is on the National Register of Historic Properties, and recently achieved local designation:

<https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/.../HALRB.STRATFORD...>

Rhees Burket was a Civic Leader: Montgomery County Civic Federation President, 1946-1948, and MCCF Washington Star Cup Recipient, 1947, "for performing most outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County."*

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic modernism," "in harmony with nature," his 1957 S.S. Library of stone and glass and brick, integrated into the hilly landscape, was the largest County library at the time. This public building is Burket's legacy to Silver Spring and Montgomery County.

Burket's Mid-Century Modern structure, " 'an architect's dream,' was the phrase used to describe the new S.S. Library when it was given its final inspection last Th. Morning by the County Manager, the County Council, and several members of the County Library Board," The Maryland News, 12/28/1956.

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Built on a 200-footwide strip running from Colesville to Ellsworth Drive, on land given by the Hecht Co., “the Building was designed to fit into the naturally landscaped lot which adds to its attractiveness. The few trees that had to be moved to make way for the building were saved and replanted. The many dogwood, blue spruce and beech were undisturbed,” The Maryland News, 2/28/1956.

“Rhees Burket, the Architect, went all out on this building. And from the looks of things he had a fairly free hand in design and equipment. . . . if the sign wasn’t out front we doubt if you would guess it to be a library. It looks more like a new home built by some Texas oil or ranch man . . . we would suggest you stop by this beautiful building and take advantage of the books and the atmosphere. You will thoroughly enjoy it,” Silver Spring Record, 1/26/1957.

“Library Pioneer” Journal in “A Dream Comes True,” glowingly describes with photos and floor plan diagram Burkett’s elegant, light-filled library structure and its conveniences, attached, Sept./Oct. 1958.

Frank Lloyd Wright’s “organic modernism,” “in harmony with nature,” is expressed in Burket’s structure with its low horizontal lines, low-pitched hip roofs and projecting eaves to create an integrated-into-the-landscape quality. A massive fieldstone chimney rises at the axis of intersecting roof planes. Library has a cross-shaped open floor plan.

Walls of native uncoursed stoneyhurst stone, a polychrome mica schist, quarried at Seven Locks and River Roads, Montgomery County, appear to undulate in juxtaposition with glass and aluminum framed window walls, awning windows, continuous bands of clerestory windows and red brick walls.

Stone chimney and several stone walls carry through into the interior spaces of the singular structure.

An elegant, very long and wide, approx. 70’ X 20’, flat-roofed entrance canopy doubles as a carport for auto pick up and drop off point welcoming patrons arriving via the access road. Three large canopy roof openings allow light and moisture into the raised planter beds below.

This building is unique; there is no other community structure of this style in all of S.S.’s CBD, or adjacent.

Looking forward to working together to achieve and celebrate the adaptive reuse of Silver Spring’s unique former Library, “in harmony with nature,” and its continuing service to the community: Rhees Burket’s legacy gift to Silver Spring and Montgomery County! Interior and exterior Photos are available.

Jerry M., Marcie S. & George F.

I’m writing to ask that in considering building plans for the old Silver Spring Library site that you try to retain the original building. Silver Spring is trying to make mid-century Modernism the hallmark of downtown Silver Spring.

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I grew up in Silver Spring when it was the only library around so I spent many a day in there. The old 1950s Bookmobile was my other source of so much joy. They would let me sit there on the stool reading for as long as I wanted. I believe for many, many of the old Silver Springers this is a valuable piece of the past. I hope we can keep this piece of the past into our future.

Thank you so much,
Joan S.

As a former resident of Silver Spring [1949 - 1980] I strongly urge the adoption of the Gudelsky development plan. What we have learned here in St. Petersburg, FL (where I now Live) is that, if you fail to preserve a reasonable spectrum of your history, you will surely lose the capability for a community identity. Without community identity, there grows a void in the collective concern of it's citizens and that void leads to the growing improbability of garnering collective support for any community projects. We, here in St. Petersburg have honored our past and successfully integrated it into our growth plans. The result is we have a growing, vibrant community, while those around us who have failed to follow this path have faltered and are, only now, beginning to imitate our vision. I would hope Silver Spring, in light of the Silver Theatre restoration project, would do the same. Good Luck....

Dale M.

I grew up in Silver Spring in the 1960s and learned many valuable lessons at the Colesville Road library.

In the spirt of the building having been a public resource all these years, it would be a travesty and a civic insult to allow some developer to raze the building and build ticky-tacky overpriced apartments.

Maintain this building as a public resource and historic architecture. To do otherwise would be unforgiveable and a slur against the people.

Ray G.

Dear Sir / Madam,

as a resident of Silver Spring for all my 51 years and having lived in Downtown Silver Spring - at Cole Spring Plaza, I support the Gudelsky project which retains and includes the adaptive use of 1957 Silver Spring Public Library. This structure is a gem and should not be torn down.

Thank you,
Arden R.