

SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report OCTOBER 2015 *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

[1] Community Issues

Changes downtown

- New developments – and redevelopments – continue happening in downtown Silver Spring, bringing more and more people to the streets, stores, restaurants, and public spaces. Central, a new apartment/retail development broke ground at the site of the old Baptist Church at Wayne and Fenton; Progress Place, the County's new service center for the homeless, also broke ground behind the Fire Station on Georgia Avenue. Ellsworth Place (the old CitiPlace) continues its on-going renovation, bringing in new stores – and a Dave & Busters – to be opened by the Spring/Summer of 2016. There have also been at least 3 small restaurants opening in Fenton Village; and, two small food markets are under construction... These changes – coupled with the opening of the Transit Center and the pending start of construction for the Purple Line - bring an increased level of activity to the downtown. Additionally, the street life already evident in the core (Ellsworth and Veterans Plaza) is broadening to the emerging restaurant row on Georgia Avenue... Some of the issues we are addressing as a result of all this increasing economic vitality include:
 - Constantly adjusting to “living under construction”, working with Department of permitting services and others to ensure pedestrian flow is not impeded during construction;
 - Adjusting to new parking regulations for the garages, working with the Parking Lot District to help disseminate information so the public is aware of the new hours and procedures;
 - Responding to higher demand for our Clean & Safe Team, particularly in the evenings and nights;
 - Working closely with the Civic Building and Veterans Plaza operations, as it is becoming increasingly evident that this facility is reaching capacity; and thus we are beginning to explore options for community celebrations at Jessup Park.

Graffiti throughout the Regional Area

- We continue seeing an increase in graffiti throughout the Regional Area. Additionally, old graffiti seems to be staying in certain locations longer than usual. We are reaching out to GRAB – and encouraging the public to call 311.

Lyttonsville Master Plan

- The working draft of the Lyttonsville is out. We expect to be working more closely with the community as they prepare their response, particularly regarding proposed zoning changes.

Montgomery Hills Beta Directory

- We've completed the 'beta' directory on-line map for Montgomery Hills. This effort complements the study going on by SHA in Montgomery Hills (from 16th St. to the Beltway); and, the nearby project at the intersection of Forest Glen and Georgia Avenue.

[2] Advisory Groups

Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board (Monday, October 12th)

In September, they heard from the developers of CitiPlace (renamed Ellsworth Place) as renovations pick up pace; and, from Will Kenlaw (DOT) regarding the opening of the Transit Center. In October the agenda will focus on the growing need for expansion of school facilities in the Area.

The Board's Committees are also very active. Recently, the Neighborhoods Committee joined the Lyttonsville Community in their deliberations regarding the Master Plan; the Transportation, Energy, and Environment Committee brought together sustainability experts from the County and Takoma Park; and, the Commercial Economic Development Committee is focusing on the many commercial hubs throughout the Region, outside the downtown.

The SSCAB will seat three new members at the November meeting.

Silver Spring Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee

The next meeting is set for December 1st.

Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee (Thursday, October 15th)

In September they heard from Will Kenlow (DOT) regarding the opening of the Transit Center; and, Jose Thommana, the new Parking Lot District Director. In October, the Committee will hear from Park and Planning regarding the streetscape standards for downtown Silver Spring.

Silver Spring Transportation Management Advisory Committee (No meeting in October)

In September they heard from Gary Erenrich (DOT) regarding the various transportation projects in Silver Spring and the operational matters as the Transit Center gets ready to open.

The Regional Center also follows and/or participates in other Advisory Groups and efforts:

- Youth Advisory Committee. (Will restart in the Fall)
- Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee
- Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority
- Long Branch Business League
- Rapid Transit System (BRT) Community Advisory Groups
- Purple Line Community Advisory Teams (to be formed in the near future)

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