

SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report NOVEMBER 2016 *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

[1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

Lyttonsville Sector Plan: The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee of County Council will discuss the final draft of the Plan at its regularly scheduled meeting November 21st. The issue of allowable density has become a point of contention among residents.

Homelessness in Downtown and Vicinity: We are working closely with the Health and Human Services Department, the Police, and other pertinent agencies (including non-profit providers) to address the increasing number of small encampments that have cropped up not only in downtown, but along Georgia Avenue and the Beltway entry. (The Winter Shelter is now open, which should alleviate the situation.)

Downtown Trees: The Urban District is assessing the health of trees throughout downtown. As some of the trees are replaced, the tree canopy will decrease temporarily, but eventually will return.

Old Silver Spring Library: The final of three Old Silver Spring Library Stakeholders Group meetings was recently held. It was attended by over 50 people (other than the Group members.) In the weeks to come, the Department of General Services will release a Request for Proposal incorporating the Group's advice. The RFP will request that senior affordable housing be part of the proposal. At least the top two respondents will be asked to present their ideas to the community before a final decision is made.

Studio Plaza Development in Fenton Village: The site is being cleared to build a 399 unit apartment complex which will include a public parking garage. (The site is in the inside of the block bounded by Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring Avenue, Fenton Street, and Thayer Avenue.) During construction, the public parking lot that existed on the site has been reduced to approximately ½ the number of spaces and is being operated privately. We are working with the developers (Fairfield) and the community to minimize impact and ensure business continuity during the expected two year construction phase of the garage.

College Master Plan: The Montgomery College Takoma Park / Silver Spring Campus Master Plan was presented to the Takoma Park City Council recently. (It was presented to the Silver Spring Urban District a couple of months ago.) One building in the Plan (a math/science building to be located in the east side of the campus) is proposed to begin final design work soon. Some members of the community are reaching out to the College for the opportunity to provide further input into the design and plans.

South Silver Spring Safety and Security: The South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association called for a meeting with the Police, the State Attorney's Office, and Councilmember Huckler recently to discuss complaints about the resurgence of evident criminal activity in the Travelodge Motel in the area. There will be a follow up meeting with the Motel operators, the Police, the State, and the community to explore the possibilities to address this situation.

NOTE: See previous Monthly Reports for more information and updates on other community issues; i.e.: the Purple Line, Bus Rapid Transit, recent major downtown developments, and the Long Branch Fire. *Available at: <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/boardscommittees/cab/index.html#agendas>*

[2] ADVISORY GROUPS

Citizens Advisory Board

The SSCAB regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, November 14th. Regional Area public school principals have been invited to a share about their respective schools and how the neighborhoods can better engage with the school community.

At the last meeting, the SSCAB heard from the Board of Elections regarding the process for the recent election; and, at the same time, the Board held a voters registration drive.

The process for selection of recommended applicants to serve on the Board continues. In November, the Regional Director will submit names selected by the Nominating Committee to the County Executive, who in turn will submit his recommendations to the County Council. It may not be until after the holidays before the new board members are actually seated on the Board.

Urban District Advisory Committee

The SSUD Advisory Committee regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, November 17th. On the agenda is a dialogue with David Petr, the new Director for the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation; and a review of the Silver Spring Urban District Streetscape standards.

At the last meeting, the SSUD Advisory Committee had a dialogue with WSSC and PEPCO. (The staff subsequently met with Washington Gas.) Their operational procedures for doing work in downtown Silver Spring was discussed – and so were ideas for enhanced collaboration. The Committee also heard a presentation of the proposed hotel development at the gas station at the corner of Georgia and Colesville and agreed to provide advice generally supporting the concept.

Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee

The SSA&E Advisory Committee met Tuesday, October 11th. They heard the annual presentation by Susan Hoffmann of the major, marquee productions in Silver Spring (the Jazz Festival and Thanksgiving Parade); and, the community uses of The Fillmore. The Committee members (all major venues in the A&E District) also shared their respective major events coming up during the Holidays. The Committee will not meet again until next year at a time to be determined.