

SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report December 2016 *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

[1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

- **There are seven notable development project in downtown Silver Spring** where the County has a substantial role; and in which we remain engaged with many internal and external agencies and stakeholders:
 - *The New Progress Place* – The Ribbon Cutting for this long awaited project is Saturday, December 10th. Once operational in their new location, Progress Place will offer homeless services through Shepard's Table, Community Visions, InterFaith Works, and others; as well as provide 21 PLQs (living units) for previously homeless individuals. We are coordinating with Health and Human Services, the Police, and others to ensure the vicinity of Progress Place remains safe for all.
 - *Construction of garage under Studio Plaza development* – Construction has already; and is scheduled to be completed within two years. However, the disruption to the parking options (given the temporary elimination of over 70 spaces) has required new signs to be installed directing drivers to optional nearby parking spaces. We continue working with the developer and operator of the parking lot to ensure businesses and their customers are appropriately informed of the changes and the options for alternate parking. Some business have expressed a noticeable drop in numbers of customers and are seeking relieve for their hardship.
 - *United Therapeutic Marquee Facility* – UT's new marquee facility is now under construction at the location of a parking garage that had become economically obsolete – and was beyond repair. (The County sold the property to UT.)
 - *ArtSpace Project at the old police station on Sligo Avenue* – This project is proceeding as scheduled, with construction scheduled to begin sometime in 2017.
 - *Redevelopment of the Old Silver Spring Library site* – After seeking input from a Stakeholders Group over the last few months, the Department of General Services has released the Request for Proposal for the redevelopment of the site to include senior affordable housing. The RFP is available at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DGS/OPD/FormerSilverSpringLibrary.html>
 - *Development of a retail/residential mixed-use project at the site of the Park & Planning Headquarters* – This project is part of the Wheaton Redevelopment. When that redevelopment is complete and the Park & Planning offices move there, the site will be developed as a mixed-use project, tentatively scheduled to begin construction in 3 years.

- *Concept to develop a multi-purpose arena at garages near the Transit Center* – The County, through the Department of Transportation is seeking conceptual ideas for a multi-purpose arena at the garages off Bonifant, west of Georgia Avenue (near the Transit Station.) The community engagement efforts to present additional information is now in process.
- **Parking in downtown Silver Spring** – With the coming of the Holiday Season and the recent opening of Dave & Busters, downtown parking at the core of downtown (garages 60 and 61) is becoming increasingly congested. We are working with the Parking Lot District – and doing repeated notices through our eNewsletters - to ensure downtown visitors know that plenty of parking exists in nearby lots and garages.
- **Long Branch Community** – The Long Branch Partners (a network of non-profit and public sector providers) and the area’s faith communities continue efforts to ensure residents are aware of – and can access – the many nearby services. The Long Branch Business League is also engaged in consistently working with area businesses to inform them of available resources. Still, information and access gaps seem to exist.
- **Purple Line** – A recent gathering at Blair H.S. brought together over 50 artist that are finalists in the process to select artists for the Purple Line project. The activation of Community Advisory Teams is on hold pending resolution of certain legal issues.
- **Bus Rapid Transit** – The US29 segment of the Bus Rapid Transit system was highlighted at a recent press event. The meetings of the Community Advisory Committees will resume after the New Year.

NOTE: See previous Monthly Reports for more information and updates on other community issues; i.e.: Lyttonsville Master Plan, homelessness downtown, TP/SS Montgomery College Master Plan, Langley Park Bus Station, and more. *Past reports are available at:*
<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/boardscommittees/cab/index.html#agendas>

[2] ADVISORY GROUPS

Citizens Advisory Board

- The SSCAB regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, December 12. This month the SSCAB is joining with the Office of Human Rights and others to do a follow up to the community policing conversation began earlier this summer.
- At the last meeting, Regional Area public school principals were invited to share about their respective schools and how the neighborhoods can better engage with the school community.

- New SSCAB members recently recommended by the County Executive and approved by County Council include: Mary Anderson, Donald Coffey, Mulugeta Habteselassie, Raynold Mendizabal, and Vineda Myers. This brings the Board to a full, eighteen (18) members.
- The SSCAB will host the County Executive's FY18 Operating Budget Forum on Wednesday, January 25, 7pm in the Silver Spring Civic Building. This will be one of five Forum held throughout the County in January, one each in each Regional Area.

Urban District Advisory Committee

- The SSUD Advisory Committee regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, December 15th. On the agenda is a presentation by the County's Department of Transportation, Parking Lot District Division regarding a Request for Proposal seeking concepts for a multi-purpose arena at the two parking garages off Bonifant Street, near the Transit Station; a presentation by Susan Hoffmann, the staff producer of the Thanksgiving Parade, the Jazz Festival, and Summer Concert Series regarding these marquee events; and, a review of the Silver Spring Urban District Streetscape standards.
- At the last meeting, the SSUD Advisory Committee had a dialogue with David Petr, the new Director for the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation; and heard an update by Steve Silverman regarding the proposed legislation to enable the creation of business improvement districts.

Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee

- The SSA&E Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday, December 13th. The Committee will discuss their funding priorities for FY18 in preparation for the Operating Budget Forum.
- At their last meeting, 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.

Transportation Management District Advisory Committee

- The SSTMDAC will meet on Thursday, December 8th. The Committee will hear from Joana Conklin, MCDOT Rapid Transit System Development Manager, and Jackie Seneschal, Maryland Transit Administration, to present an update on the County's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.
- At their last meeting in October, the Committee reviewed the Transportation Management Plans that each of the major employers in downtown Silver Spring has to submit annually indicating their initiatives to promote transportation alternatives.