

SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report January 2017 *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

[1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

NOTE: *As we begin the new year this report is intended to provide a broad view of some of the key issues in which the Regional Director is involved. It was authored December 26th. It will be updated if need be upon the Director's return on Monday, January 9th. Previous reports are logged in our website at:*

<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/boardscommittees/cab/index.html>

The December report highlighted seven notable **development projects 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*
- *Construction of garage under Studio Plaza development*
- *United Therapeutic Marquee Facility*
- *ArtSpace Project at the old police station on Sligo Avenue*
- *Redevelopment of the Old Silver Spring Library site*
- *Development of a retail/residential mixed-use project at the site of the Park & Planning Headquarters*
- *Concept to develop a multi-purpose arena at garages near the Transit Center*

There are certain **planning projects** at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) that we are following and are in close contact with the affected community:

- *Lyttonsville Master Plan*
- *Montgomery College Science Building (and Master Plan)*
- *Placemaking Initiatives and the activation of public spaces*
- *Various private developments at different stages of the pre-construction planning process (Thayer and Fenton, Cameron and 2nd Ave, among others)*
- *At least 5 major private developments at different stages of constructions*

Outside the core of downtown and downtown Takoma Park, we remain in contact with the Regional Area's **smaller commercial hubs** regarding a variety of distinct issues:

- *Montgomery Hills (SHA's study to address traffic congestion)*
- *Brookeville (relationship to the Master Plan)*
- *Four Corners (impact of the Bus Rapid Transit project)*
- *Long Branch (post disaster community building)*
- *Langley Park (maximizing operations of new Transit system)*
- *Fenton Village (minimizing impact during construction of Studio Plaza and County's new garage)*

We are also following up with the Police Department – and other agencies - regarding various **public safety and community concerns in certain neighborhoods**:

- *Seven Oaks*
- *Montgomery Knolls*
- *East Silver Spring*
- *Homelessness downtown*

We continue working with other agencies, non-profits and **apartment and condominium** residents to address issues at:

- *Northwest Park Apartments (code inspections)*
- *Flower Branch Apartment (post disaster community building)*
- *Crescent Condominium (location of bus stop)*
- *South Silver Spring (illicit activities in nearby hotels)*

Three major **transportation projects** and three specific transportation issues will require continued attention during 2017

- *Purple Line (resolution of litigation and beginning construction)*
- *Bus Rapid Transit (continued community dialogue as we move towards implementation)*
- *Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (implementation of design in key downtown locations)*
- *Parking downtown (messaging availability)*
- *VanGo (routing and branding)*
- *Wayfinding (signage and messaging to facilitate navigating downtown parking, venues, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation, particularly in downtown Silver Spring)*

We continuously work with the many groups (private, public and non-profit) that use the **Silver Spring Civic Building and Veterans Plaza**. Some examples include:

- *Major Community Celebrations and Festivals on Veterans Plaza (at least 25 already scheduled for 2017)*
- *Major events in the Civic Building's Great Hall (one almost every weekend – and many weeknights)*
- *Ambiance performances programmed by Silver Spring Town Center, Inc. on the Plaza for safety and security – and community building*
- *Countless smaller gatherings, meetings, and such inside the facility*

[2] ADVISORY GROUPS

Citizens Advisory Board

- The SSCAB regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, January 9th – always the second Monday of the month. The SSCAB will be joined by the Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget to better understand the County's Operating Budget process as it prepares to develop its advice letter to the County Executive after the Budget Forum later in January (Wednesday, January 25th in Silver Spring.)
- The last SSCAB meeting (in December) was a special meeting. The SSCAB joined the County's Office of Human Rights, the Office of Community Partnership's Faith Liaison, the Department of Police and others in a community dialogue about policing and hate crimes. Over 200 people came to this intense dialogue, which focused on solutions and next steps.
- The three SSCAB Committees will meet on Monday, January 23rd, the fourth Monday of the month – their regularly scheduled date. The three Committees are (a) Neighborhood, (b) Commercial Economic Development; and, (c) Transportation, Environment, and Energy. While each Committee may meet

independently, they oftentimes have joint meeting. The agendas for the January meetings are still being developed, but will all focus on the operating budget.

- 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.

NOTE: We are working aggressively to get the word out about this opportunity for input throughout the Regional Area. We are contacting the Area civic organizations, faith communities, non-profit organizations, apartment managers, business community, schools, rec centers, and libraries. It is important to get a large turnout at this Forum not only to provide advice on the Operating Budget, but also to highlight the value of participation in County policy. We ask everyone interested in participating to come, bring a friend, and be ready to ask a question.

Urban District Advisory Committee

- The SSUD Advisory Committee regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday, 19th. On the agenda is an update regarding the White Oaks development and its relationship to Silver Spring; and, a postponed presentation by Susan Hoffmann, the staff producer of the Thanksgiving Parade, the Jazz Festival, and Summer Concert Series regarding these marquee events.
- At the last meeting, the SSUDAC heard 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; and, a presentation by the Park & Planning Department regarding the proposed changes to the Silver Spring Urban District Streetscape standards.

Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee

- The SSA&E Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, December 13th for their quarterly meeting. The Committee discussed their funding priorities for FY18 in preparation for the Operating Budget Forum. And, they also heard from 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.
- Their next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February, so they can further refine their advice letter to the County Executive regarding the FY18 Operating Budget.