

# SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report    JUNE 2019    *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

Please review archive of reports from links at <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/boardscommittees/cab/index.html>

## Census

The 2020 Census is set to be conducted in April of next year. It is critically important that we maximize participation and ‘everyone gets counted’. Working with the Office of Community Partnerships we’ve begun the process to establish the Census Complete Count Committee. The first meeting is set for Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:45 at the Long Branch Recreation Center. We expect to have a broad base network that will consistently work with the community to solicit the trust which is indispensable for people to feel comfortable completing the Census forms. This network will include non-profits, businesses, the faith community, libraries, rec centers, advisory groups, and every County agencies that ‘touches’ the public. The network will also include the many community celebrations that take place throughout the Regional Area – see further below.

## Business Support

We have begun our strategic, comprehensive approach to supporting entrepreneurship and businesses in our Regional Area.

- Under the leadership of Councilmember Katz and the County Executive, the 4Business Listening Session was held in Silver Spring recently. It was extremely well attended. And it sparked the idea of doing a specific session with the Silver Spring IMPACT network this summer.
- The County’s new Business Unit has established a presence in Silver Spring. Daniel Koroma, Business Specialist is now based with us in our Regional Offices.
- Also in our Regional Offices, we are providing space for a Latino Economic Development staff that provides technical assistance to businesses impacted by the Purple Line throughout the Region.
- We are supporting the efforts of both the Long Branch Business League and the Montgomery Hills neighbors to do a community celebration in September highlighting area businesses and the importance of intentionally supporting local businesses.
- We just held the 9<sup>th</sup> Taste the World in Fenton Village event, attended by over 2,000 people. This event affirms the many area restaurants by providing participants the opportunity to do a ‘restaurant crawl’.
- We are getting ready to unveil the long-awaited signage for improved wayfinding to the businesses on Bonifant Street and Long Branch which are impacted by the Purple Line.\*
- We are also working with the businesses in these two small commercial hubs (Bonifant and Long Branch) and in Brookville Road to do a quality web-site that will enhance their virtual presence.\*

## **Purple Line**

(\*Other than highlighted above.)

The Purple Line construction activities are picking up at a brisk pace. Every station location is seeing construction activity, some more than others. To see latest updates, visit:

<https://www.purplelinemd.com/construction/construction-updates>

Among some of the on-going work in the Regional Area:

- The Talbot Bridge is now taken down; the 16<sup>th</sup> Street shopping centers are now construction staging zones;
- the Silver Spring Metro Station 'green' will also soon become a construction staging zone, and there will be a new bridge over Colesville parallel to the WMATA tracks;
- trees along Wayne Avenue have recently been cut down;
- work continues at the SS International School, the Plymouth Street Tunnel;
- and Arliss Street will remain close for the duration of the construction.

Definitive dates are not yet set for the start of construction on the streets to lay down the tracks along the path, or at major intersections like Wayne and Fenton and Georgia and Bonifant. or the closing of the bridge at Spring and 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

## **Beltway Widening**

The Silver Spring community, under the leadership of Councilmember Hucker, continues expressing its strong consensus that the State's proposal has major flaws. A specific alternative to the State's proposal was presented recently at a major news conference. [Maryland Board of Public Works voted on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.]

## **Walking Silver Spring**

When the Purple Line is functioning, most people living south of the Beltway in Silver Spring will be no further than a 22 minute walk from a station. This will be simply transformative. In an effort to affirm this 'culture of walking', we have begun doing a series of 'walks' to highlight how efficient walking can be in Silver Spring, including a monthly Art Walk and walk focusing on neighborhoods near downtown. We plan to expand these walks to other areas in the months to come.

## **Community Celebrations with a Purpose**

There are over 100 community celebrations annually in the Silver Spring Regional Area. Many of these events are organized and paid for by community and civic entrepreneurs in the Silver Spring Civic Building and Veterans Plaza. Other events are held downtown by the Peterson Company (by the Fountain), the many other venues such as AFI and The Fillmore, and the Arts Center at the College. Silver Spring Town Center Inc. (SSTCi) organizes a series of events that increasing focus on the arts. The City of Takoma Park also has an array of celebrations throughout the year. And some smaller commercial

hubs have their own celebrations as well (i.e.: Long Branch, Montgomery Hills, Fenton Village, and Takoma Langley.)

The County supports these celebrations in a variety of ways. We try to list them in our Community Celebrations eNewsletters and provide a list of organizers to spark connections, partnerships and collaborations. We directly support many of the celebrations in the Silver Spring Civic Building and Veterans through the County's Community Access Program which provides limited funding to reduce the cost of renting the space; and by direct support of SSTCi. We also provide some limited financial support to neighborhood celebrations through our Mini-Grant Neighborhood Program.

The County continues to pay for and produce the Thursday Summer Concert Series, the Silver Spring Jazz Festival (scheduled for August 24<sup>th</sup> this year) and the Thanksgiving Parade (scheduled for the Saturday before Thanksgiving.)

What all these celebrations have in common is that they are intended to bring people together to celebrate, spark economic activity, and build a more thriving community.

#### **Other issues we are following**

- Adventist Hospital move to White Oaks and the physical plant left in Takoma Park
- The new Science Building in Montgomery College TP/SS Campus
- Pepco's work on Fenton
- Major developments under construction downtown and their impact on pedestrian safety and traffic flow
- Pedestrian safety and speeding through neighborhoods
- New developments being proposed throughout the Regional Area, including various housing developments
- New major investments downtown (change of ownership at Ellsworth Place; Refresh of Peterson Company/Foulger Pratt 'downtown' shopping center)
- Implementation of new funding for enhanced security at Progress Place and surroundings
- SHA plans for Montgomery Hills
- Bus Rapid Transit System implementation
- Bike paths in and around downtown
- Scooters pilot project
- Night-time economy impact on quality of life (noise and late night / early morning activities)
- Public Safety Cell tower proposal in Four Corners

#### **[2] PRIMARY ADVISORY GROUPS**

Most Advisory Groups slow down for the summer and do strategic planning. The SSCAB re Census