

# SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report    AUGUST 2018    *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

## [1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

### **Small Merchant and Business Support**

We are working with the Purple Line Partners, MTA, DOT, and others to ensure business continue during the construction of the Purple Line through the Silver Spring Regional Area.

On Bonifant Street, we are moving forward in designing and fabricating directional signs and banners for 'Discover Bonifant'.

In Lyttonsville, the detours for the closed Lyttonsville Way bridge are in place, including limited access to Stewart Avenue for local traffic.

In Long Branch, new signage is being designed and will be implement in collaboration with the Purple Line Partners and others, thanks to the availability of \$300,000 rediredted for this purpose.

In Montgomery Hills, the community is coming together to have a multi-civic association 'block party' in one of the County owned parking lots. The intent is to affirm the businesses in the area, improve pedestrian access, and increase participation in the long term planning process.

### **South Silver Spring safety concerns**

We are working with Councilmember Tom Hucker and the South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association (SSSNA) to address community concerns regarding the safety and security issues around some of the hotels in the area. This conversation is on-going and has included the Police, the State's Attorney, and others.

### **Oakview Neighborhood Action Team**

A meeting with the community leaders is set for August 14<sup>th</sup>. At that time, the leadership will be updated on the issues identified through the Neighborhood Action Team and plan for a larger community meeting.

### **Downtown Safety and Security Neighborhood Advisory Team**

Working with the office of Councilman Tom Hucker and the various service providers at Progress Place (InterFaith Works, Sheppard's Table, and Bethesda Cares) a strategy is being developed for increased security in the parking lot and surroundings – including the CSX underspass.

### **Neighborhood Mini Grants Program Applications**

We have received over 10 applications for the neighborhood 'mini-grants' program. This program – which grants up to \$1,000 for neighborhood projects (block parties, etc.) was very successful last year and we look to repeat that success this year. We will be making granting decision shortly after Labor Day.

### **Community Celebrations on Veterans Plaza**

Almost every Sunday through the Fall is booked for a major community festival on Veterans Plaza. Saturdays are also busy, with the Farmers Market extending its presence onto Veterans

Plaza as well. (The Jazz Festival is coming up in September; the ice skating rink opens in October; and the Thanksgiving Parade is in November.)

### **Downtown Real Estate Activity**

- There seems to be quality demand for the Discovery Communications facility. They are scheduled to vacate the facility early next year.
- Ellsworth Place shopping center was sold for \$91M, including the rights to build a seven story addition on top of the existing building.
- The Silver Spring Innovations Center will be transitioning to a high tech incubator.
- The Grosnover development – the old Baptist Church at the intersection of Wayne and Fenton – is now completed, including the construction of a smaller sanctuary and a mid block passageway.
- Studio Plaza's 400 unit apartment complex is scheduled to be completed mid-2018. The 2-story, 150 space County parking garage will open in the Fall.
- United Therapeutic is schedule to complete its new building in the Fall as well.

### **Infrastructure Construction**

- The Purple Line has begun construction. This is most evident in Lyttonsville (the closed bridge), Wayne Avenue at Manchester (the tunnel), and Long Branch (Arless St closed.)
- PEPCO's work on Fenton in downtown will soon be moving one block south, having nearly completed the block from Coelsville to Ellsworth.
- WSSC's work on Colesville continues.
- Park Valley in Tokoma Park is closed for months.
- In downtown around the Fenton Village area, various private development projects (Studio Plaza, Washington Properties, HOC) under construction continue challenging pedestrian and vehicular flow.

### **National Night Out**

There are over 10 communities in the Regional Area, including Takoma Park celebrating National Night Out.

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

**The Regional Area major advisory groups are not meeting in August. These include:**

- Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board\*
- Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee\*
- Silver Spring Transportation Management District\*
- Purple Line Advisory Teams (CATs) – there are 4 in the Regional Area
- Bus Rapid Transit Community Advisory Committee for South US29

\*These groups are seeking new members. Notices are out.

### **Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee**

*(The SSRSC Director coordinates the work of the Committee.)* The A&EAC will meet August 22<sup>nd</sup>. On the Agenda: An update on the proposed downtown Silver Spring Business Improvement District (BID); and a report on the State A&E District meeting that took place last month.