

## **[5] MEETING SUMMARY**

**Woody Brosnan provided this excellent summary of the meeting:**

**The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board heard Council President Valerie Ervin and officers from the Montgomery County and Prince George's County Police departments Tuesday night talk about the proposed teen curfew law.**

**Ervin said that in addition to the changes announced last week by the county executive, council members are discussing a "sunset" provision that would let the law expire after two years. This would let the county collect data on both the effectiveness of the curfew and the fairness of its enforcement and then decide whether to keep it, she said.**

**She said she plans to attend the public safety committee's work session on the proposed curfew law on Thursday and that there will be at least one other committee session on the curfew. She expects the council will need until the end of October to complete work on the curfew bill.**

**Ervin said public safety is the topmost priority for the council. She stressed that there needs to be a comprehensive approach and a regional approach, which is why she has met with the police chiefs of DC and Prince George's County.**

**"My perspective is: What do we do to make sure the young people are safe and have things to do in the community. And what are we doing to create jobs for school students and in the summer months," said Ervin.**

**Ervin said she wants another meeting on the root causes of youth violence and that she wants to explore a model based on an Oakland, Calif. Program where youths themselves work with other youths to avoid violence. (Go to [www.youthalive.org](http://www.youthalive.org))**

**(Ervin also stated during the meeting that a group which is interested in converting the old Silver Spring library to a child center when it closes in 2013 is amendable to the idea of co-locating a teen center there. This is a long-sought goal of Safe Silver Spring.)**

**Ervin said that with federal assistance the county has in recent years effectively targeted Latino gangs like MS-13 but in the meantime there has "been a proliferation of black gangs," in part because the gentrification of DC has resulted in the movement of younger people into Montgomery County.**

**She said that at a recent meeting of the county NAACP the room was roughly divided with half favoring a curfew and half feeling that the police have not historically worked with the community.**

**Assistant Police Chief Wayne Jerman said the police would not use the law in any manner that is not fair and consistent.**

**"It is meant to reduce juveniles from getting into trouble and reduce juveniles from being victims of crimes," said Jerman. Right now they are generally unable to take a juvenile into custody unless a crime is committed.**

**Hank Stawinski, deputy chief in Prince George's County, described how they used their curfew law. If a juvenile is found to be violating the curfew law it is generally used to bring his or her family to the attention of social services, he said.**

**They don't use sweeps to round up curfew violators. Generally, they are responding to calls from businesses or residents concerned about teen behavior, said Stawinski.**

**Luis Cardona, youth violence prevention coordinator for Montgomery County, said that in his experience Montgomery police would not hesitate to contact human resources to work with troubled youths and families. He mentioned that prevention programs have been reduced in the metro area. The gang fight in Silver Spring was triggered by a fight the previous week at a D.C. Caribbean Festival in which a Montgomery County gang whipped a D. C. gang. Luis said we need to focus on jobs for these teens.**

**Victor Salazar, operations manager for the Silver Spring Urban District, described the role of the “redshirts” in assisting police in the downtown area. He said that ranges from removing gang graffiti to escorting individuals to actually alerting police to criminal activity. Salazar said a curfew would “help us understand what the parameters are and when to call the police when they (teens) exhibit bad behavior.”**

**Bernice North of the SSCAB Neighborhood Committee summarized the discussion from the committee meeting of 8/24. [see our notes that we shared from that meeting]**

**Audience responses mirrored previous public meetings on the proposed curfew.**

**One man who identified himself as a member of the Montgomery County Civil Rights Coalition compared the curfew law to involuntary servitude and said it punishes all youths for the misdeeds of a few.**

**Richard Jaeggi, executive director of the Gandhi Brigade, called for a comprehensive approach to the problem including funding for youth development programs.**

**Jim Zepp felt that curfews drain police resources and felt curfew centers was an important addition. He recommended a nighttime economic districts which included adequate transportation and eating places.**

**Tony Hausner, chair of Safe Silver Spring, said he agrees with a comprehensive approach but that he also supports the teen curfew because there has been a significant increase in the number of gang members and a number of violent crimes committed by juveniles and that many of these crimes occur after curfew time.**

**Kathy Stevens, chair of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, said she wants the Neighborhoods Committee to have another discussion on the proposed curfew law before the full board takes up the issue again in October. She cautioned that the board will not necessarily take a yea-or-nay position on the curfew.**