



# TOWN BULLETIN

**AUGUST 29, 2001**

**Town Council Notes** -- Next meeting: **Monday, September 10**, 7:30 p.m., McCathran Hall.

The public is invited to attend. August Council actions included:

- agreed that Planning Commission should proceed to develop a project description for surveying work with goal of recording correction plats for blocks bounded by Chestnut Road, McCauley Street, Grove Road and Center Street

## **Public Hearing**

Thursday, September 6, Town Hall, 7:30.p.m.

**Subject: Historic Preservation Commission**

One mechanism to promote preservation of both the Town's historic character and architecturally significant structures is the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission. An ordinance, drafted with the help of Town attorney Bill Roberts, would create a Commission with advisory responsibilities.

The Commission would help property owners, the Planning Commission and the Town Council address historic preservation issues by reviewing from a preservation perspective plans submitted for building renovations, demolitions, variances, subdivisions, zoning changes and changes in neighboring jurisdictions. The proposed ordinance does not change the criteria for approving any of these activities, but does require that the Historic Preservation Commission have an opportunity to comment where appropriate.

The proposed ordinance amends the Town Code of Ordinances for the purpose of:

- Establishing a Town Historic Preservation Commission to safeguard the heritage of the Town by encouraging the preservation of the historic nature of the Town and the elements of its cultural, social, economic and architectural history; to stabilize and improve property values; to foster civic duty; to strengthen the Town's economy; and to promote the preservation and appreciation of the historic nature of the Town as a whole and specific sites and structures within the Town for the education and welfare of residents of the Town, visitors thereto, and sojourners therein;
- Adopting provisions for the appointment of members of the Historic Preservation Commission, including staggered terms for initial appointments;
- Requiring prior review and comment by the Historic Preservation Commission on applications for certain building permits, variances, special exceptions, subdivision plans, zoning reclassification of property, and revisions to the Town's Master Plan;

- Providing a source and repository of information, expertise and guidance regarding issues of historic preservation within the Town; and
- Clarifying the existing Code of Ordinances to expressly include the demolition of any or all of a structure as requiring a building permit from the Town.

**Labor Day Potluck** -- Celebrate summer's end by joining your friends and neighbors at the Labor Day Potluck Supper which begins at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall. Table service is provided, but please remember to bring your own drinks. An awards presentation will follow for the weekend's athletic events and one boy or girl whose athletic excellence and sportsmanship best exemplify the Washington Grove Spirit will achieve the distinction of SUPER GROVE.

**Book Signing** -- You are cordially invited to attend a book signing and reception for *A History of the Woman's Club of Washington Grove* by Sylvia Tate Horan. Please join us on Sunday, September 16, 2001 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at The Woman's Clubhouse. Wine and cheese will be served. RSVP to Joli McCathran by September 10. 301-869-5358.

The Woman's Club, which held its first meeting on July 29, 1926, is celebrating its 75th anniversary by publishing this history. The book reveals not only the interests and activities of the women from the Club's early years to the present, but also the influence of the group on the Town. The author, Sylvia Tate Horan, has studied Club minutes and the Town archives and has gathered photos and personal information from members and neighbors to authenticate this valuable addition to our history. Copies are available at the Town Office for \$20.

**Special Trash Collection -- Saturday, September 29**

Collection may include furniture, appliances (but **not** those with Freon), rugs, large toys, small auto parts, etc. Materials may **not** include construction by-products, large automotive parts, or tires. Items must be put at the curb by 7:00 a.m.

**Maple Lake News** -- A reminder that there will not be any lifeguards at the lake as of Saturday, August 25. They will be returning to school and we do not have any substitutes. The lake will be open for swimming at your own risk. There has been a problem with children using the area around the shed at the lake, including the cement slab at the entrance, for bathroom purposes. Dodie Tippens will answer questions at 301-869-1682.

**Civil War in Montgomery County** -- Long-time Grove resident Charles Jacobs will be the featured speaker at the annual Woman's Club PotLuck Dinner to be held on Thursday, September 20 at 6:30 p.m. Mary Kay DuBois and Cynthia Werts, co-chairs.

**Hazardous Materials Disposal - Sunday, September 9**

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Shady Grove Transfer Station

**Planning Commission News** Next meeting will be Tuesday, September 4, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall. The public is welcome to attend.

**Grove Singers begin Rehearsals** -- tuesday, September 18

Kathy Lehman will direct the Grove Singers Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in McCathran Hall. The Holiday Concert will be Saturday, December 15. All voices are

needed and encouraged to join the fun! Questions? Call Kathy at 301-926-1253.

## **Mousetrap Concert Series**

McCathran Hall  
Sundays, 3:00 p.m.

October 28, 2001  
Pro Musica Choral Ensemble

November 18, 2001  
Zurab Ninua, Tenor

March 17, 2002  
Lumina String Quartet

April 14, 2002  
Juliette Kang, violin  
Thomas Kraines, cello

Adult tickets: 4 Concert Series (\$50)  
single concert (\$15)

Children (under 12): 4 Concert Series (\$40)  
single concert (\$12.50)

Programs recommended for children only 7 and older. Call Alice Negin (301-926-2858) or Ann Briggs (301-926-6347). Tickets are going fast! Seating is limited.

### **Town Forester Begins Resident Education Program**

Dan Landry, Town Forester, began visiting residents on August 22 to discuss the health of their trees. This effort is part of the Town's program, as recommended by the report of the Tree Advisory Committee, to educate and advise residents on steps they can take to protect the Town tree canopy. Dan also has been working on a long-term plan for trees on Town property, which will include an inventory of Town trees to help in managing and replacing the Town tree canopy. The next scheduled day of visits will occur on September 9th, when Mr. Landry will visit those residents originally scheduled for August 12 that was rained out.

When a visit is scheduled, residents are asked to prepare questions for Mr. Landry before the scheduled time, and are asked to sign a "Town Forester Visit Sheet" that explains the educational nature of the visit. The visits are scheduled in 30-minute blocks to allow for all questions to be addressed. If you would like to have a visit from Mr. Landry, we are scheduling two days in September. The dates below may be the last for a few months, depending on the weather and leaf-fall.

The two dates are Sunday, September 16, 12:00-6:00 p.m. and Monday, September 24, 4:00-7:00 p.m. If you would like to place your name in the lottery for these two days please call Darrell Anderson at 301-963-8555 or email at

[kilgore.trout3@verizon.net](mailto:kilgore.trout3@verizon.net) by September 7. Leave a message telling the date and general time (early or late) you would like a visit. Anyone who signed up in August but did not have a visit will be given priority for September; however, you still need to sign up to say that you will be available on those days. The schedule will be distributed by September 12.

**Building Permits** -- If you are going to erect a building or structure (including fences), make structural alterations to, or move any existing building or other structure, you must first obtain a building permit from the Washington Grove Planning Commission. The Town zoning ordinance governs setbacks, lot coverage, and height. Applications are available at the Town Office at 301-926-2256. Please allow at least 10 days for review by the Commission. Call John McClelland at 301-963-3328 if you have questions about zoning code requirements. Interior renovations, which involve electrical, plumbing, or load-bearing changes, generally require a County permit. The Town must first sign off all applications for County-required building permits.

### **Building Permits Issued**

Evans, 317 Brown Street, fence

Menge, 336 Ridge Road, new house

**Rent the Woman's Club House!** -- Planning a surprise birthday bash, family reunion, graduation gala, wedding reception, planning session or business meeting . . . consider the charming wooded setting, spacious main room, screened porch, kitchen and restroom facilities of the Woman's Club House. For information or reservations call Kitty Vogan at 301-840-9416. Heat and air conditioning!!

**Come Sing Along!** -- The Mom's Club of Great Seneca will host music time for children at McCathran Hall on Wednesday, September 12 at 10:30 a.m. All Grove children are invited to participate. Please call Lawren Selby at 301-963-7073 for more information or if you plan to attend.

### **Kudos**

To **Ralph Hurst** for his drawings and help with the bid proposal for replacing the Maple Lake dock

To **Betsy Klinger** for shooting wonderful digital photos of the Grove capturing the feel of "paradise"

To the many "**Summer in the Parks**" **parents** who go the extra mile in an already busy July to create a truly wonderful program for Grove children.

To **Linda Baim and Co** for action-packed weeks of tennis instruction with considerable doses of hilarity.

### **The Acorn Library**

**The Acorn Library** is a free, self-service children's library in Washington Grove. It contains over 2,400 volumes including toddler books, picture books, easy readers, fiction, poetry, humor, anthologies, reference books, science, history, biography, sports, and holiday books. There is also a large collection of children's magazines that are available to be used and cut up for school projects, etc.

**Where:** The library is housed, courtesy of the Klinger family, in two rooms of a green-roofed garage near the corner of Center Street and Maple Road. Look for the Acorn Library sign hanging from the windowbox. **When:** Acorn Library is self-serve and is available for use at any hour on any day of the year. If you find the door locked, there

is an easy-to-remember code that opens the lock. Call Betsy at 301-977-3517 if you need the code. If you have trouble with the doorknob, pull it toward you and turn hard to the right.

**Checking out:** If you are a new user, you may borrow three books at a time. You will find a file box of index cards on the desk. List your name and phone number on one and use it to record the date and the names of books you borrow whenever you visit. Strike through the titles you have returned. There is no due date, just a limit on the number of borrowed books you may hold from the library at one time. Regular visitors may borrow six books.

Questions or Donations? Call Betsy Klinger at 301-977-3517 or E-mail to [BtsyKlInger@aol.com](mailto:BtsyKlInger@aol.com).

### **Deadline for Next Bulletin - Monday, September 10**

#### **Applicant Sought for Board of Zoning Appeals**

If you are interested in serving on the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals, please call Mayor John Compton at 301-330-8264. The Board is authorized to grant variances from strict application of certain zoning regulations, and to hear and decide requests for Special Exceptions. The Board consists of three members and an alternate, all appointed for three-year terms.

#### **Community Service Day Volunteers to Tackle Washington Grove Lane Trash**

Amy Porter, Woman's Club volunteer coordinator, has a plan to clean the trash from the part of Washington Grove Lane that is within Town boundaries. **Save Saturday, October 27, Community Service Day, to help kick off this campaign!**

Four or five teams of adults and young adults will be supplied with equipment to do the job. Thereafter, one of the five teams, on a rotating basis, will be asked to commit to spending several hours just once a year to keep the roadway clean of trash. Of course, additional volunteers will always be welcome. Please call Amy at 301-977-6768 if you would like to help.

**Community and Neighborhood Initiative Grants** -- The Montgomery County Regional Services Centers are offering a grant program to community groups who can use some financial support in the achievement of a community program or initiative. The maximum grant can be up to \$2,500 per entity per year. The application deadline is November 2 and the application can be downloaded from the Internet at [www.emontgomery.org/grant/grantappdirection.html](http://www.emontgomery.org/grant/grantappdirection.html). Funds are very limited and are intended for new projects that will benefit the community. Copies of the application form are available at the Town Office.

**Check Out the Town Website!** -- Coordinator Diana Talbert and volunteers have been working hard to make the Town's website attractive and user friendly. [www.washgrov.sailorsite.net](http://www.washgrov.sailorsite.net)

**Recreation Committee** -- Wednesday, September 5, 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Council Room

**Casey Fields Development Issues Status Report** -- In early August, the Oxbridge Group filed a pre-preliminary plan with Park and Planning entitled "Casey Property at Mill Creek". The plan is very similar to the one presented previously with dense

clustered housing in the residentially zoned part of the Casey property. Town representatives have met with planning staff and will participate in meetings with the Development Review Committee.

**Mayor and Council Meet with Oxbridge Group** -- On July 25, Mayor John Compton and the Town Council met with representatives of The Oxbridge Group, contract purchasers of the 65-acre parcel along Ridge Road currently owned by the Casey Trust. William Chen, the Town's advocate in development of the Casey tract, and Stephen Kaufman, representing developer Sami Totah of Oxbridge, arranged the meeting.

**Development Plan**-- The purpose of this meeting was to view a revised residential development plan proposed for the Casey field. The pre-preliminary plan, which Mr. Kaufman indicated could be filed as early as the next day, was not different in any substantial way from the previous plan. Steve Gang described the plan that calls for 162 dwelling units, a combination of 141 single-family homes and 21 townhouses clustered on about 50 acres of the 65-acre tract. The plan shows a junior soccer field and tot lot next to Ridge Road, and a tennis court and basketball court next to the townhouses in the subdivision's interior. Mr. Totah reported that the single-family homes are expected to sell for \$400,000 to \$500,000. The single-family homes will have garages behind with a distance of 30 feet between garages. Paved width of alleys will be 14 feet.

**Annexation**-- Mr. Kaufman listed the following advantages to Washington Grove if the Town were to annex the new subdivision prior to development: more compatible infrastructure because County road construction requirements would not be applicable; more control over the configuration of Amity Drive through the subdivision; lots of new residents and accompanying increase in property tax revenue; flexibility in lot size to trade smaller lot sizes for additional recreation or open space. Mr. Kaufman did not know whether the requirement to build some moderately priced dwelling units would apply if the land were developed under Washington Grove's zoning code. Advantages to the developer would be lower costs to develop infrastructure and ease of project acceptance. Disadvantages to the Town would include the developer's desire to maintain the proposed high density and the likelihood that the Town's legal and engineering expenses connected with the development would greatly exceed the revenue generated from fees paid to the Town by the developer.

**Productivity Housing** -- Mr. Kaufman stated that he had not spoken to Barbara Sears, an attorney practicing with Linowes and Blocher, about the plans of her client KSI. Town representatives had learned from County planning staff that Ms. Sears represents a potential buyer of the Casey industrial parcel who is interested in getting a special exception from the County Board of Zoning Appeals to permit mixed-use productivity housing on the industrial parcel. If the industrial parcel were to be developed, then Crabbs Branch Way would be extended to connect with Amity Drive.

**Transportation Issues** -- When asked about the roads and alleys running perpendicular to Ridge Road in the upper field indicating a desire line for connection to Washington Grove, planner Steve Gang defended the plan stating that planners today like connectivity between communities. Town representatives asked about the "paper connections" to Ridge Road shown on the plan. Mr. Gang asserted that County planners would require at least one emergency access connection to Ridge Road.

Mayor Compton suggested that Amity Drive be redesigned to be even more circuitous to moderate speeding and cut-through traffic. Bill Chen asked if Amity Drive could be "plugged" in the middle.

**Intercounty Connector Reservation** -- The land held in reservation by the State was released from reservation in June 2001. There was some discussion about whether the plan for dense residential development close to Washington Grove could be flipped to have the development occur on the property formerly held in reserve closer to "The Grove" shopping center, leaving more open space near Washington Grove. Mr. Totah emphasized that if he were to submit a development plan to the County for the land formerly held in reserve, a previously agreed-upon alternative cluster plan would be necessary to be used in the event the initial plan was rejected.

**"Active Adult" Housing** -- The possibility of up to 50% of the development being devoted to "active adult" housing was raised by Mr. Totah. This housing was described as single-family dwelling units that included a ground-floor bedroom. One of the occupants of these houses must be 55 years or older and this requirement runs with the land from owner to owner.

**Town Concerns** -- Peggy Odick stressed that the Town's major concerns remain density, recreation, open space, and access to Ridge Road. Sami Totah said that a 50-foot strip of land along Ridge Road could be conveyed to Washington Grove and dedicated to public use. He said that he would sell the Town additional land for full market value. Tricia Knox stated that the Town would like the entire length of Ridge Road to be buffered from the impact of development. Darrell Anderson expressed concern that the historic nature of the Town could be damaged by incompatible development. Sami Totah reported that he had not yet chosen a name for the development. According to Oxbridge, a homeowner's association would be responsible for maintenance of new recreation facilities and the development would be too small to support a community building. Oxbridge was asked to consider a swimming pool in the interior of the development. Mr. Kaufman stated that the Oxbridge Group would keep an open dialog with both the Town and members of the Greater Shady Grove Civic Alliance to help resolve obstacles to development.

**URGENT! Individual Letters to Planning Board Needed Now** -- Letters to the Planning Board opposing the Oxbridge development plan that threatens the historic character of Washington Grove and its uniqueness in the County are needed now. The plan's grossly incompatible architectural scale and high-density neo-urban community lacks sufficient recreational facilities. Its physical layout shows streets perpendicular to Ridge Road with "paper" connections to Ridge Road, setting up an ambiguous relationship with the Town. Washington Grove is seeking an undeveloped buffer along all of Ridge Road. The plan is entitled Casey Property at Mill Creek, Plan No. 702004. Letters may be addressed to: Honorable Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board, M-NCPPC, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760. If you have questions, please call the Town Office at 301-926-2256.

**About 900 Residential Units Proposed for Casey Industrial Tract** -- On August 16th Mr. Bruce Knapp of KSI Services Inc. discussed their development concept with town representatives (including the Mayor, Councilperson Peggy Odick, Planning Commission Chairman John McClelland, Dave Stopak and our attorney Bill Chen). KSI has contracted to purchase the land from the Casey Trust for as much as \$19

million. They intend to apply for a special exception use as allowed by the County in the I1 zone for "Productivity Housing", where at least 35% of the units must be affordable to families with incomes below the County median income (this is not low-income housing). Of the 40+ acres, 20+ were deemed developable with the remainder wetlands and streambeds to be left as open space. The plan described was entirely residential, and featured extension of Crabbs Branch Way to the Oxbridge (Sami Totah) Casey development which would access all units. Over 550 apartment units were planned on the 13 acre-tract between Shady Grove Rd., Crabbs Branch and I370; and on the 7+ buildable acres north of I370 would be placed 70-100 townhomes along I370, 172 multi-family apartment units adjacent to Robert's Oxygen and the railroad tracks, and south of Brown St would be about 80 units for the "active" elderly. Mr. Knapp said they planned to submit the plan to Park and Planning in September.

Information on KSI is available at [washgrove@erols.com](mailto:washgrove@erols.com)

Web: [www.washgrov.sailorsite.net](http://www.washgrov.sailorsite.net)

Website Coordinator: [website20880@yahoo.com](mailto:website20880@yahoo.com)

**Town Hall:** Center Street & Chestnut Road, Washington Grove

Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Closed Wednesday mornings

**Hall Scheduler** Jenny Long 301-869-3824

**Maintenance:** Jim Fletcher 301-963-5850

**Street Light Out:** Vicki Erhart 301-208-9442

**Building Permits:** John McClelland 301-963-3328

**County Animal Control:** 301-279-1066

**County Police Non-Emergency:** 301-279-8000