

TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS—October 2009

CONTRACTS—Charlie Challstrom

Trash/Recycling Contracts – Next Special Collection is Saturday, November 7. This is specified to be for items not acceptable for regular weekly collection. Our Town's contract includes two of these special collections per year, but we pay the contractor extra by weight for disposal of whatever is hauled away by the contractor. Prior to this collection, residents will be invited to place potentially re-usable items at curbside 2 or 3 days in advance, weather permitting.

Leaf Collection and Disposal Contract – Collection of leaves begins on or about October 31. The contractor is again U.S. Lawns of Montgomery County.

Snow and Ice Removal Contract – Invitations to bid on our contract for the upcoming season have been sent to a list of firms compiled after receiving recommendations from other municipalities in Montgomery County. The contract specifications were updated to include agreement that the proportionate mix of sand and salt for the sand/salt service will be approved by the Mayor or his duly authorized representative, and a request that sand be the primary material used when necessary.

ROADS AND WALKWAYS—Charlie Challstrom

Street Light Update – We remain interested in viewing a lower wattage LED street light example to help us assess the appropriateness for Washington Grove. While awaiting an opportunity to view more LED installations, I have asked Mike Lizza, Pepco's "Street Light Czar" for any updates on Pepco's plans for street light replacements using high-pressure sodium lamps. We would like the opportunity to view a representative example of low wattage high-pressure sodium to assess this option as well.

Google Street View – A request was submitted to Google to scope out collecting Google Street View images along our roads and walkways. Google Street View provides horizontal and vertical panoramic views for many streets in the world, collected using a fleet of Google vehicles. Google Trikes have been used for pedestrian areas, narrow streets and park alleys that cannot be accessed by car. Our intent is to help create an awareness of Washington Grove in other jurisdictions and to support land use planning that reinforces a sense of community.

FORESTRY & BEAUTIFICATION—Georgette Cole

The Tricolor Beech and Cryptomeria were successfully moved on October 21. Ace Tree Movers used a 54 inch tree spade and Jim and I feel both trees are in excellent shape. We will be watering them as needed and monitoring them closely. The new locations are roomier and the increased visibility is better suited to these specimen trees. Sadly, Jim and I also discovered that a Weeping Willow (fall 2008 planting) on the far side of Woodward Park had been girdled by a rutting male deer. The protective mesh collar that the forestry committee had installed was simply ripped off and the stakes we'd left in place were no impediment. We will need to re-think how best to prevent this kind of damage. Using solid tree tubes as collars may be possible even on these somewhat larger trees.

The Tree-mendous (MD DNR) order of 13 assorted trees was picked up in Burtonsville October 22 by Jim, Maria, Joli McCathran and Carol Uhlendorf. Joli and Carol assure me that the tree quality is quite good. With four dedicated tree experts choosing them I have no trouble believing that! Signs for the October 31 volunteer day to plant the new trees in the East Woods go up this weekend. If we have a good turnout we will amend the soil in the enclosures, plant the trees and add tree tubes to them. The latter was suggested by Joli for additional protection. This past week we discovered that enclosure #2 had been breached by a single longitudinal cut about 7 feet high. It looks deliberate and unlikely to have been done by a deer, but there is no other damage. However, it would only take one such cut and a deer getting in to wipe out our efforts so we are planning to place tree tubes on the new trees.

Four Stadler trees will be installed Tuesday October 27 and the Forestry Committee will be participating in the process.

The Forestry and Beautification Committee met October 21. The ongoing tree planting was reviewed along with the past years work. Plans for raising the ground around the Hall front paver area were discussed. Jim will advise us on the best plan and how to implement it. We are discussing gravel for Hall drainage with the Hall Needs Committee and beginning to plan for another Arbor Day program with the Woods Committee.

PLANNING COMMISSION—Georgette Cole

The Planning Commission met on October 7. I was not able to attend but, from the agenda kindly supplied to me by Kathy Lehman, the following items were covered.

103 Brown Street---Letter to resident and architect sent to Mayor for distribution.

118 Grove Road---fence permit denied until house location survey supplied.

344 Ridge Road---side set back still under discussion.

MD speed cameras---can WG install on County roads (WGL and RR St).

PC/HPC Work Sessions: The sixth work session is scheduled for October 28.

MEMORIALS—Marida Hines

Nothing to report at this time.

LAKE COMMITTEE—Marida Hines

All is well and there is nothing to report.

RECREATION COMMITTEE—Marida Hines

The Recreation Committee met on Wednesday October 21 and reviewed several recent, ongoing, or upcoming events:

- The recent BluesTober event at the Gazebo was well-attended and much enjoyed. The decision has been made to repeat the event next year.
- The Grove's first Drawing Class, sponsored by the Recreation Committee, is finishing up. It was a great success with a full roster of 15 students, almost all Town residents. The Wednesday evening class will continue with another 6-week session ending in mid-December, take a break for the Holidays, and then continue with a third 6-week class running from January 6 through February 10. Each series of 6 2-hour classes is \$150 per person. Topics already covered include Gesture drawing, Controlled and Blind Contour drawing, Negative Space drawing, Measuring, and Weight Volume drawing; upcoming topics include linear perspective, foreshortening, modeling with light and dark, human anatomical drawing, and much more.
- The Recreation Committee is sponsoring a series of 6 photography workshops to be held in November and December in Town Hall for Town residents. Topics will include how to choose and use a digital camera, getting great prints from a home ink jet printer, taking great pictures, taking great flash pictures, photo-retouching, and creating digital art in image-editing programs. Each 2-1/2 hour workshop will be \$40 per person.
- The Holiday program preparations are well underway and the Mousetrap concerts are, as usual, a great success.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

Nothing to report.

WEB SITE—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

No new developments or additions.

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

The Town Council made the determination to allow a November 1 field use exemption, due to cancelled games for one of the soccer teams with a valid permit. This is a one-time exception and will not be allowed except in extenuating circumstances.

The playground is ready for fall with new mulch around equipment. There will be a recommendation by mid-January for either certain equipment replacement or refurbishment to bring up to safety codes, or a combination of both. A request is being made that once the project is discussed with the Town Council, a public hearing will be scheduled to accommodate transparency, input, and the sense of the town on acceptance of State Open-Space funds for the future.

MAINTENANCE—Joe Clark

See forwarded list from Jim Fletcher.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT—Joe Clark

The main issue recently has been over cars parked in Woodward Park after dusk. Three incidents have been reported to the Town and the police have agreed to put it on their nightly patrol watch.

Two points about this activity: first, those who reported the suspect cars were very wise in not confronting the automobile owners. Second, having a description of the car and if possible the license plate will be helpful in police follow up.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE—Joe Clark

A meeting was held on October 22. In attendance were two representatives of the County and residents from Saybrook, Emory Grove and Washington Grove. A follow up meeting will be held in early December, hopefully at Mercy Seat Church on Washington Grove Road.

We discussed community issues – crime, gang violence, poverty and the lack of information of what help is available. We also discussed how neighbors can help neighbors and two community programs are specifically targeted for neighbors to help those most in need. Certainly trust between communities needs to be developed; also, identifying common issues shared by not just neighborhoods but across ethnic and racial boundaries is going to be important.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION—Sylvie Favret

Project Review

330 Ridge Road: A new Accessory Building was presented for review by John Lottes. The building is intended to be a woodshop to facilitate the eventual renovation of the main house and is placed closer to the road than the structures. Mimi Styles volunteered to write the review.

Building Permit application review procedure

Margot Bohan had reviewed the material that is provided to those wanting to apply for a building permit. At previous meetings she had discussed with the Commission’s problems that the average applicant would encounter in attempting to fulfill the requirements. She condensed her comments and provided

them online for the members' review. The list of comments was discussed in some detail, but it was decided that a priority list would be decided on at the next meeting in order to be able to focus on specific problems and specific solutions.

Coordination with the Women's Club/Education

Margot Bohan is in the process of developing a list of seminars, topics and speakers that would be the basis for educational opportunities in collaboration with the Women's Club. The list was not reviewed. Margot will email the list to the members along with a suggested priority. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Grant Workshop

Margot Bohan attended a state sponsored workshop on the availability of various grants. She will provide information she learned at the next meeting.

McCATHRAN HALL—Sylvie Favret

Nothing to report.