

TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS—April 2010

Contracts—Charlie Challstrom

Gravel for Priority Areas:

A truckload of gravel (15 tons of 1/2-inch blue chip) was dumped by Lafarge Aggregates at the Maple Lake parking area. John Lottes has offered to help spread using his front-end loader. A small amount of gravel (540 lbs of 3/4-inch blue chip) was placed at the intersection of Grove Road and Dorsey Street as a test of protecting edges of the asphalt. Prior to ordering gravel for the parking area near McCathran Hall, ends of the drain pipe under Chestnut Road at Center Street have been uncovered to remove accumulated sludge. Protecting the upper end of this drain pipe with large rocks is proposed; then another 15-ton truckload of gravel will be dumped for the lower parking area. If this dump-and-spread approach is deemed successful, we will proceed with gravel for the remaining priority areas.

Streetlight Feedback Needed:

Town residents have been asked for feedback on the induction streetlight on Chestnut Road directly across from the Town Office. Using Pepco's proposed rates, we would save more than half of our \$20,000 annual streetlight energy and maintenance costs with induction lights. If the Town will accept use of induction streetlights, we can request that Pepco convert a limited set of existing incandescent streetlights to induction fixtures. Funding for this demonstration conversion to induction is proposed as part of the \$5,000 energy grant from the Maryland Energy Administration.

Contract Surveys Update:

To resolve Block 9 boundary problems, a land swap via deeds is proposed to exchange pieces such that Seventh Avenue would correspond to the intended 10-foot width, and the Nagrod porch and fences would not encroach onto public property. Snider & Associates placed wooden stakes at the proposed locations for new survey monuments to enable all interested parties to observe and understand this proposal before we initiate a Town ordinance to authorize the deeds.

Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) Workshop:

Mary and I attended the LGIT workshop in Hanover to get updates on our current insurance coverage as well as guidance on new options of possible interest to the Town. There are coverage options to explore for equipment breakdown (e.g., sprinkler system protecting McCathran Hall) and tenant user liability insurance (e.g., renters of McCathran Hall). And we can consider raising liability deductibles to save premium cost. A major item of interest is the new Maryland Local Government Health Cooperative, but at this time we do not meet the minimum requirement of two employees participating with health insurance coverage. Our LGIT membership includes risk management assessments, legal advice on employment matters, and recommended training materials (including on-line training) for new employees and newly elected officials.

Forestry & Beautification—Georgette Cole

Arbor Day on Saturday morning was a mixture of the Woods Group trails project in the East Woods and the Forestry beautification effort at McCathran Hall. Darrell gave an Arbor Day speech highlighted by the planting of an American Chestnut courtesy of John Bradfield and the American Chestnut Foundation.

Sapling planting continues. Thanks to Eric Gleason, who donated an additional 40 saplings, Alice Negin has spearheaded a planting effort in the McCauley Triangle Park next to Washington Grove Lane. She and her team have set up a nursery bed of 25 baby red cedars and 10 baby white pine saplings. They have also planted six larger white pines from the Maryland Tree-mendous program. Five baby white oaks were also bought and will be planted by the Forestry Committee. The initial 50 oak saplings from Ayton State Nursery were planted as planned and we hope to see new leaves coming out soon.

The Forestry and Beautification Committee met on 14 April and considered the Draft Maintenance Plan from Joe Clark and his committee as it applies to the F&B Committee. The Committee agrees with the Maintenance Priorities listed and fully supports the recommendation of a long range landscaping/maintenance plan for the Town. A 10 year plan is an excellent idea and the use of a landscape designer to shape that plan would be very desirable.

Planning Commission—Georgette Cole

The Planning Commission met on April 7.

Public appearances: 108 Maple Avenue residents came with a query regarding their proposed fence for a dog run. The fence does not require a boundary survey as it is perpendicular to property lines not violative of setback requirements for the non-perpendicular property line.

Building Permits: Gary Temple and Ralph Hurst came with the revised application for 114 Ridge Road (bathroom addition). The new plan was reviewed by Eric Gleason. The architect has made changes that will ensure that the structure does not infringe on the set back limit on the south side of the property.

The PC discussed the report from the code inspector and recommended that PC chair, Bob Evans notify the Mayor that the two properties are not in compliance.

Update: pursuant to our last council meeting discussion the PC is double-checking the particulars of these two violations and their inspection by Larry Plummer.

PC/HPC Work Sessions: “Mansionization Update”. Steve and Bob Evans met with Bob Booher for their subgroup. A ‘trigger mechanism’ tool was discussed. Samantha reported on the meeting of her subgroup (with David Stopak and Mimi). The tool under consideration was non-voluntary design guidelines. There would be different guidelines for different areas, IE: overlay zones. The PC discussed these ideas and agreed that we are not able to support either of these approaches in their current form. David Neumann is preparing a summary of the work to date for the May Bulletin. The next joint PC/HPC meeting will be on April 28. We hope to have material that could be presented to the town for discussion and feedback in May.

The PC discussed the new wording for Draft Ordinance 2010-04. Introduction of the ordinance on April 12 and the public hearing on April 26 was approved.

Historic Preservation Commission—Sylvie Favret

The HPC met on April 20, 2010.

HPC/PC Work sessions:

Bob Booher met with Bob Evans and Steve Werts to discuss zoning enforcement methods. Bob Evans and Steve are not in favor of the trigger threshold concept (different rules are triggered off according to the size of the addition). Bob Booher suggested that this idea of trigger threshold should be presented to the town for discussion.

Mimi Styles and David Stopak met with Sam Beres about design guidelines. David does not know how to make the Planning Commission understand the idea of design guidelines. The best method against mansionization is to have people build houses they want to live in. It is not a “yes or no” process, but a collaborative process between the town and the homeowner: “how can we do something you will be happy living in and that will integrate well in the town, something that will last and be preserved.”

Contributing House identification template:

Mimi presented a draft of an information packet the HPC could provide to new residents when they first move into town. It included printed information from the website (photos, house history) and information found in the house history file town archive. There should be no filter; all information in the file should be made available. Bob Booher will write a cover letter to go with the packet.

Coordination with Women’s club/education:

Bob Booher had contacts with Clare Kelly.

McCathran Hall—Sylvie Favret

Nothing to report.

Lake Committee—Marida Hines

The Lake Clean-up day had terrific turn out and we accomplished many tasks, including:

- Raking, Trash clean-up trash, Clipping a lot of the thorny bushes around the lake, and Cutting up and disposing of the tree that fell down inside the fence near the spring.
- Check-out by John Mudre to observe the algae and pond-weed.

We have lined up an abundance of life guards, including several from last year, along with Jack Leng and Peter Suzich. In addition, we have a terrific swim instructor lined up, Casey Stalker who has 3 yrs experience.

Maintenance issues for the lake include power being restored to the lake by PEPCO; Jim was able turn on the Pump & Bubbler to help get ready for algae control. The Bubbler will be used full-time. Algae needs to be treated ASAP. Jim Fletcher has been contacted, but we need to wait for the storms to pass before treatment can begin. Gravel was dumped in the Lake Parking area on Apr. 22, and will be spread with the help of John Lottes.

Geese have not been seen except occasionally, and they have not settled down to build a nest. We are checking the lake daily and ready to react when we see them.

The combination on the Lake gate at WG Lane was changed on April 18th. To get the new combination number, please call the town office or member of the Lake Committee.

The Lake Committee meets the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm in the Town hall (March to September).

Recreation Committee—Marida Hines

- The Recreation Committee hosted Bil Lepp at McCathran Hall on April 25.
- The Grove Art Class Art Show will be held May 2, 2-5 pm. The Committee is hoping to have David Klinger’s band play. Refreshments will be served.
- The Town Meeting Party planning is well underway, chaired by Charlene McClelland and Ann Briggs.
- Music Weekend plans include:
 - Friday: Big Band, pizza and beer
 - Saturday: Children’s Recital during the day and the Bobby Lewis Band at Zoe Wadsworth Park (7-11 pm)
 - Sunday: Baroque Breakfast

Other dates of note include the July 4 activities and a baseball game and potluck in the afternoon.

Memorials—Marida Hines

Nothing to report.

Maintenance—Joe Clark

See Maintenance Report in separate file.

The Maintenance Committee will have its report to the Council before the May 10th meeting. There will be an opportunity for public comment on the Town's maintenance issues at the Committee's meeting on April 28th.

Public Safety Report—Joe Clark

Nothing major to report

Community Liaison Committee – Joe Clark

Town residents have been to three training sessions in April for Neighbor Corps. Plans are being made for meetings in May.

Intergovernmental—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

Nothing to report

Website—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

Nothing to report

Parks & Playgrounds—Ted “Kelly” Ventresca

Nothing to report