

COUNCIL REPORTS

February 2012

RECREATION COMMITTEE – Alice Negin

The next meeting will be March 21, 2012 in the Old Council Room at 7:30 pm.

Upcoming events:

Dancercise; Wednesdays 7:30-8:30 beginning February 8th

Mousetrap; February 26th 3pm McCathran Hall – Poulenc Trio

Irish Ceili Dance; March 16, 2012, 6-11pm

Summer in the Parks; Enrollment forms due April 30, 2012

Children's Program; Barry the Magician – April 15, 2012 – 2pm, McCathran Hall

Missy Yachup, Recreation Chair will confer with Mary regarding budget needs for next year.

MCCATHRAN HALL – Alice Negin

The McCathran Hall Committee met on January 30, 2012. They worked on budget items for the upcoming budget, gathered cost estimates and will have discussions with Bill Robertson and Steve Werts (Council and Maintenance) regarding what items will be outsourced and which will be done in-house. Mary Challstrom is a member of the Hall Committee and has the information with regard to the budget. Ann will keep Mary up to date as to any changes or additions needed.

One possible change to Hall rentals would be to have renters take away the recyclables after Hall use.

WEBSITE – Alice Negin

Nothing to Report

PLANNING COMMISSION – Joe Clark

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on February 1, 2012.

Public appearances: there was a request for a clarification for the location of a temporary structure at 302 Ridge Road. After some discussion, the home owner will reapply for a permit, locating the structure near where it presently is sited.

Permits: The fence permit for 127 Maple Road was approved.

The permit for 201 Maple Road to locate a garage on the property was discussed and the applicant will proceed with his application for a new structure.

Towne Crest rezoning and redevelopment: There was much discussion about problems related to the increase in density, storm water runoff, traffic concerns and other impacts on the neighborhood. The Planning Commission will submit a proposal for consideration to the Mayor and Council outlining the Commission's objections to the Towne Crest redevelopment.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL – Joe Clark

The Town is working with the City of Gaithersburg Planning Department in developing a coordinated response to the proposed rezoning of the Towne Crest Apts. on Washington Grove Lane.

HPC – Joli A. McCathran

Projects: There were no projects to be reviewed.

Towne Crest Development: Discussion was held on the proposed development and how the HPC could make its views known to the MC Planning Board.

Permit review procedure: Charlie Challstrom explained the Planning Commission's concerns about the HPC's proposed project review procedure. In the PC's experience, project proponents come in at the last minute with their final plans in hand and get very upset if their PC review and approval are deferred until the subsequent PC meeting in order to allow HPC review. David replied that for the proponents who were willing to work on their plans with the HPC in advance that the proposed procedure would not delay their getting PC approval. Margot added the on-line building permit form and process could benefit from revision. She volunteered to draft up a revised form that includes HPC input, to present to the PC.

McClelland permit precedent: After a short discussion of the McClelland family's experience with the MC building permit office regarding retaining historic windows as part of a project, it was agreed to defer discussion of options for HPC action to integrate exceptions for historic building materials into MC permit applications.

Expanding Historic District: Town Resident Wendy Harrison appeared at the meeting to present her research and thoughts on possible expansion of the current boundaries of the Town of Washington Grove National Register Historic District. She will consult with MCHPC and MHT staff who are responsible for National Register listings to obtain more information on the expansion/amendment process.

PARKS and PLAYGROUNDS – Joli A. McCathran

Nothing to report.

WASHINGTON GROVE CONSERVATION MEADOW PARK – Joli A. McCathran

During February, there were two meetings held with Brenda Sandberg on site. The following was discussed:

- Plant double row of trees behind the Ridge Road hedgerow from the large opening northeast toward the grove of small Black Locusts.
- Plant double (or triple) row of trees, especially including plenty of evergreen specimens for screening, along the forest buffer against the future local park and the ICC interchange.
- Lowest priority this planting season is to start planting trees in patches along developed edges of park, since we still have edge coordination issues with existing neighboring homeowners and the Toll Brothers development that is going to plant some trees on the park.

Potential locations to plant a few of the large trees available at Pope Farm that the citizens liked discussed included:

- If the Black Walnut in the large opening along Ridge Road needs to be taken down, the citizens liked the idea of replacing it with one of the large trees.
- Install Sycamores adjacent to the wetland area in the southeast corner next to the forest buffer.
- MNCPPC staff decided that the short (under 5') cedars and hollies in the meadow would be taken down by the upcoming mowing

Additionally, P&P archeologist visited the field to look at the rock "quarries" in the lower (towards Toll Bros) side of the field. Three sites appeared being used in the not too distant past.

The archeologist said, without further studies, that they could not tell if they were also used in pre-Columbian times. But they are on a historic register so they cannot be destroyed or the trees removed around the sites, allowing more buffering in the area.

Brenda and a P&P "trail maker" also were in attendance. There will be a trail (hopefully) maintained in the lower woods for all you energetic walkers. It was agreed that the trail in the meadow portions should not look like a race track but have a meandering look.

At the moment, it was agreed that mowing once a year in the early Spring. The lower field will be cleaned up some more in preparation for reforestation. Non-native invasives may have to be sprayed or painted with herbicides on a case by case basis. It was decided that large (>5ft), more "deer proof" red cedars in the field can be saved, but the small cedars will be removed during mowing. Some of the larger native trees in the field will also be saved, so the combination will allow many good habitat locations in the meadow.

Georgette and Joli determined it was not necessary to allocate funds for the LOS field in the upcoming Town budget for FY 2013.

ROADS AND WALKWAYS – Bill Robertson

Paving: Teniseal Corporation was in town twice this month sealing cracks in our asphalt roadways. The road surface must be dry for the product application and mid day on 2/8 we were stopped by a brief snow flurry. The contractor returned on 2/13 to complete the application.

Walkways: Brush was cleared from along Chestnut Avenue between Center and Oak.

CONTRACTS – Bill Robertson

Trash and Recycling: The current contract will expire this spring and letters have been sent to prospective bidders.

MAINTENANCE – Bill Robertson

Christmas trees continue to be collected.

The sheetrock damaged by the chronic leak under the kitchen sink in Town Hall was repaired.

Drainage ditches between Pine Ave and Oak Street and Brown Street and the Railroad were cleaned. The invert of the culvert under the tracks was cleared to improve drainage in Morgan Park. This CSX culvert is in need of cleaning as it is half full of ballast.

Existing signs around Town were removed, cleaned, repaired as needed and repainted prior to reinstallation. This is an ongoing project.

Four dead trees in the park were topped by Myers & Law. Town Maintenance is removing the debris from the park.

Brush was cleared from along Chestnut Avenue between Center and Oak.

The blinds in Town Hall are being restrung as time allows. Half have been restrung to date. A floor buffer has been purchased and floors in the Hall have been waxed.

The rotted landscape timbers around the play equipment in the park are being replaced with pressure treated 6 x 6 timbers.

An information kiosk was constructed and installed at the Lake. The Lake aeration pump was removed and rebuilt. It will be reinstalled soon. Several holes in the Lake fencing were repaired.

The soccer goals were removed.

Multiple budget discussions were held and pricing was obtained for inclusion in the upcoming budget.

FORESTRY AND BEAUTIFICATION – Audrey Maskery

Pepco has started their second round of tree pruning and tree removal. Andrew Driscoll surveyed the area during the week of 1 March; I reviewed the area with Andy and made my recommendations.

Work should start on the pruning by Asplundh in the next three weeks, Steve Werts and I will supervise the work done on Town property.

List of trees on Town property PEPCO wish to remove;

- 1 Pine corner of Center/Hickory.
- 1 Hickory + 1 small Hickory at end of Hickory Road (address 400 Chestnut Ave).
- 1 Small Tulip Poplar (address 407 Chestnut Road).
- 1 Maple 5th Avenue (address 406).
- 1 Sycamore (address 417 4th).
- 1 Oak corner 4th/5th – this tree is mostly dead and needs to come out.
- 1 Oak Washington Grove Lane (this tree already marked with blue dot).

Arbor Day will take place April 24th this year. The main project for this year will be the planting of shrubs and perennial plants in garden at McCathran Hall next to Center Street. A meeting of F&B committee on the 22 March will determine the types of shrubs and plants for this area. A request to Maintenance for additional soil to be spread before Arbor Day and mulch for the area after planting has been made.

Tuesday February 28th Bill Campbell from Montgomery County Permitting Services Water Resources Section joined Charlie Challstrom, Steve Werts, Bill Robertson and I for a review of the soil erosion in West Woods. The major outflow of surface water from Towne Crest was the focal point of concern; Bill Campbell noted that should the development of Towne Crest take place with the rainfall collection and bio-treatment filters the water flowing into West Woods would be cleaner but with the same volume and still cause the same erosion. It was noted the water from Towne Crest and beyond cannot be piped into WSSC drains.

Georgette, Steve and I met with Sandy Klingenberg to discuss possibilities for changing the corner of Sandy's property (103 Grove Avenue). I have since received an email from Sandy agreeing for the large number of rocks to be removed by Town Maintenance, the tree stump would also need to be removed due to instability after removal of the rocks. Sandy agreed to purchase landscaping timers and any shrubs to be planted on a (berm) her side of the fence plus seasonal plants to add color and entrance the intersection.

There has been an addition to the resident feedback on the recently re-painted Town entrance signs. Ann Briggs suggested the original Town Artist (Jim Fletcher) could be asked if he would restore them to their original character.

MEMORIALS – Audrey Maskery: Nothing to report

MAPLE LAKE – Sylvie Favret

Ongoing discussion about maintaining landline phone at the lake. The Committee would like one more picnic table added to the budget this year.

SAFETY – Sylvie Favret – Nothing to report.

OUTDOOR LIGHTING COMMITTEE – Sylvie Favret

1. Sylvie Favret will serve as Town Council liaison to the Committee.
2. Christine Dibble gave a fascinating presentation about new laws and choices regarding residential bulb choices at our February meeting. Christine's informative hand-out will be available on the Town website.
3. The Committee is exploring options for shielding to mitigate light trespass from street lights in town. If you would like to request a shield for a particular street light, please contact the Town Office (noting the location of the street light with pole number) BY MARCH 15th.
4. The Committee approved language regarding outdoor lighting for the proposed Towne Crest Apartments redevelopment.
5. Charlie Challstrom will be a liaison to the County Department of Transportation regarding concerns about street lights in the Shady Grove Crossing development.
6. MARCH LIGHTING WALK - All are invited! Residents are encouraged to join the Committee on a walk-around-town assessment to plan for possible streetlight removals, additions, or shields. Thursday, March 22, 7:30 pm. We'll rendezvous at McCathran Hall (rain or "shine") and try to cover a much of the town as we can by dividing up into groups. Contact Carolyn Rapkievian for more information.