

**TOWN COUNCIL REPORT
NOVEMBER 2014**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION – Georgette Cole

Permit Reviews:

501 Brown Street, Winkler-Stopak residence. Shelley Winkler appeared to get the HPC's reaction to making a slight modification to approved plans for a back porch/deck project. The HPC did not have a problem with the addition of a second set of steps off the deck as reflected in a sketch. Shelley will provide additional documentation of the steps addition to the PC.

121 Chestnut, Cavey-Gilmore residence. One additional window suggested.

410 Oak, Werts residence. No suggestions.

The HPC comments on this shed project were sent to the Planning Commission November 4.

John McClelland came to the Oct 21 HPC meeting to discuss HPC concern with provisions in the proposed Zoning Text Amendment regarding regulation of vertical additions to historic houses. HPC wants to ensure that the Town's small historic houses on small lots be livable. The TC wants to ensure objective standards. The discussion will continue.

SHADY GROVE CROSSING – Georgette Cole

Two American Hollies and four Shasta Viburnum were installed by Stadler Nursery on lower Ridge Road as planned. Resident feedback is positive.

WASHINGTON GROVE MEADOW CONSERVATION PARK – Georgette Cole

The Montgomery County Parks Department plans to install "a number of trees" in the forested east edge of the Meadow Park thus thickening the tree line. Some will be installed by the Parks staff others by a tree mover/contractor. They expect to do more mowing/bush hogging along the trail in that area to reduce non-native invasive plants and facilitate the new plantings.

FORESTRY & BEAUTIFICATION – Audrey Maskery

Three American Hollies, plus four Shasta Viburnums planted by Stadler nursery early October to provide screening on lower Ridge Road.

Additional protection placed around vulnerable trees and shrubs to protect against deer rubbing.

Tree pruning & thinning program continued in Woodward Park.

Pepco will be starting their tree trimming in town early 2015. The trees that could impact power lines on both town and private property will be cut back several feet to provide clearance.

MAINTENANCE - Audrey Maskery

Leaf removal and grass cutting continued through October. Ditches cleared of leaves to facilitate flow of water after heavy rain fall, and clearing of gutters at Town Hall.

Tennis court nets removed and stored for winter. Plan for irrigation of clay tennis court discussed with Tennis committee.

Cracks in asphalt tennis court filled before start of winter.

Tree guards placed around vulnerable trees; watered in new trees on Ridge Road.

Load of gravel given to the Town for Maple Avenue by WSSC.

New gate purchased for shop entrance, supports for gate provided by CSX. The gate will be closed each evening and weekend, a path to bypass the gate has been provided by Town Maintenance.

MEMORIALS-Audrey Maskery: Nothing to report.

PLANNING COMMISSION – John McClelland

Permanent Easement Application

315 Grove Ave – Application reviewed and forwarded to the TC for approval

Building Permit Application(s)

404 Grove Ave – Mont County code requires larger area in stairwell. A dormer was proposed, however, the house is 6' from the side lot line. Due to the safety and code issues, the PC provided tentative approval as long as the inside and exterior dormer dimensions are the minimum to meet Mont County requirements.

201 Maple Rd – Garage enclosure and connection to the existing home approved

501 Brown St – A second rear stair was added and the “landing” enlarged. The PC interpreted the additional landing area as a “deck” so the projection into the rear yard setback (deck under 3 ft in height may project 9' ft into the restricted space) was approved

410 Oak St – shed approved

121 Chestnut Ave – shed approved

Public Ways and Property Permits

2nd Ave – Demo co left large ruts in 2nd Ave and Grove Ave creating a potential trip and fall hazard (liability exposure). The company/contractor will be contacted to request immediate remedial action.

Protective measures to protect Town property/land via a \$10,000 bond was introduced as a new requirement of the public Way permitting application process.

205 Grove Ave – Property owner made aware of permit requirements for potential geo thermal installation.

Pepco underground cable install near 402 Grove Ave – approved

Pepco 13 pole install with listed tree pruning and cutting tentatively approved with contact from Steve Werts and Audrey Maskery to emphasize a “minimal impact upon the trees” approach.

Zoning Text Amendment

Tabled until next month to await additional input from the Town attorney

Building Standards Compliance Checklists

11 properties completed. 8 of which are those listed for potential Town easements. Current properties for sale are also being addressed.

SAFETY - Carolyn Rapkivian

The Traffic Calming Committee presented the Mayor and Council with recommendations for action at the October Council meeting - some "easy, in-town fixes" and also some longer-term suggestions for addressing traffic issues on Route 124. As noted in the minutes, the town will follow through with the in-town recommendations and the Mayor is contacting the County to explore the longer-term possibilities for Route 124.

MAPLE LAKE - Carolyn Rapkivian

Nothing to report.

WEBSITE - Carolyn Rapkivian

After several advisory reviews, the scope-of-work and contract for the new platform and migration of content for the revised Town website were finalized to be ready for signature in November.

CONTRACTS – Greg Silber

We've been working to address ruts alongside driveways caused by refuse trucks that are forced to turn around in driveways in the cul-de-sac on lower Ridge Road. The Town made plans to pour a concrete apron at the bottom of the driveway for 336 to 340 Ridge Road to prevent further damage and erosion. A letter from the Mayor was sent on 29 September informing these residents of the plans and timing for this work. However, it is not now clear if this is the best approach to this situation. A Town meeting will be held on Thursday, 13 November at 7:30 in McCathran Hall to discuss the issue of driveway ruts caused by the trucks. We need resident input and discussion.

Fall leaf pick-up will run from 31 October 2014 – 2 January 2015 (or, until the work is completed).

RECREATION – Greg Silber

Halloween Trick or Treat activities, the BluestoberFest , and 2nd Annual Halloween Punkin' Carving Fest and Costume Parade were all big successes. This year's Holiday Show will take place on Saturday 13 December at 7:30. An organizational meeting was held in early November to plan the Show and performances.

The Committee's next scheduled meeting is December 17th, 7:30.

PLAYGROUNDS – Greg Silber

Nothing new to report. The Committee is expected to meet again in the coming months.

Tennis Court Committee – Joli McCathran and Greg Silber-Committee Co-Chairs: The Committee met on 27 October to (a) decide if the newly re-fashioned “natural dirt” tennis courts performed well for tennis players last season, and if so, (b) discuss next steps and needs for next season.

The Committee agreed by consensus that the courts play very well and indicated that the work that went into restoring them had been well worth the effort. The Committee thanked Steve Werts and Linda Baim for making these courts into a very enjoyable place to play tennis.

Routine maintenance was discussed as was the need for proper watering of the courts to keep them playable in spring/summer. The specifics of the installation of an in-ground sprinkler system were also discussed. The Committee decided that the work (to be done by Town Maintenance) and costs to install an embedded sprinkler were reasonable and recommended that work on sprinkler system should start this winter. Ongoing, in-season work such as watering/sweeping the courts is still required. The need for a team of dedicated volunteers or hired staff to ensure to take on this work was also discussed, but no particular decisions were reached.