

March 7, 2024

Dear Mayor Compton and Councilors Dibble, Gilmore, Nagrod, Patrone, Raimondo and Warfield.

Do not changed the name of the Hall from McCathran Hall to Town Hall. Changing the name of the social center of Washington Grove will cause unnecessary confusion, especially for new Town residents and people coming from out of Town on official Town business. If people try to enter McCathran Hall during business hours, the door is locked. Why would a Town Hall be locked during business hours? A nearby sign directs people to the Town Office.

The Town Office is clearly marked and is the center of official Town business. The exterior door to the Town Office is unlocked during business hours. In person Town Council meetings and Town Committee meetings are held there. The Town Clerk and Town Archivist have offices there. Town records are kept there. The Town Office is separated by lock and key from the main Hall, McCathran Hall. There is a connecting interior hallway with bathrooms, but if you leave the Town Office without propping the door, you are locked out of the Town Office.

The entrance to the main hall, McCathran Hall, is only unlocked when there are special activities such as: yoga, tai-chi, chess club, Committee sponsored informational meetings, and rentals (memorials, weddings, receptions, family parties, etc.). The Assembly Hall/McCathran Hall has historically been the gathering place for annual meetings, both in Association times and Town history only because there is no other Town-owned building large enough to accommodate participants.

There is a parallel with the City of Gaithersburg. The official government building on North Summit Avenue is City Hall. The activity center on Route 355 near Gaithersburg High School is the Bohrer Activity Center, named for former mayor W Edward Bohrer.

McCathran Hall was named to honor the 50 years of service to Washington Grove of our first mayor. The hall belongs to each of us. When I see the name "McCathran" on the hall, it reminds me of the community service tradition which has made Washington Grove the town it is and has helped the Town survive as an "oasis of tranquility" where people care for and serve one another. Please keep the name McCathran on McCathran Hall.

Sincerely,

Joan Mahaffey  
102 Ridge Road