

January 2006 Newsletter

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 11, 2005 8 p.m. Mill Creek Towne Elementary School.

Agenda: Annexation of Derwood to Rockville? (Tentative)

Speaker: Art Chambers of Rockville, a city planner, indicated that he had spoken to the City Manager and stated that **he would be glad to come to a meeting after Wednesdays' meeting on the 11th to speak on this subject**. The problem is that the 11th is Rockville planners hearings. At our next meeting or any other day, he stated, the Rockville City Manager and staff would come and give a presentation. This would need to go to the Rockville Counsel.

Announcements:

1. Both Kay Guinane and Jim Snee have resigned as co-presidents. They continue on the Executive Board. Acting president is Brad Botwin and he can be contacted at BB67Chev@aol.com.

2. The **election for Shady Grove Civic Alliance officers** will be held at the February meeting. There are vacancies for the office of President and Treasurer. Anyone interesting in serving or if you would like to recommend someone, please contact David Hunt of the nominations committee at hunthart@erols.com. Current officers serving are Brad Botwin (1st VP), Joe Parello (2d VP) and Ken Weiss (Secretary). Kay Guinane, Jim Snee and Pat Labuda will serve on the Executive Committee as former presidents.

Update on the Shady Grove Master Plan

On January 17 the County Council will take a final vote on the Master Plan. The vote is yes or no on the total plan as it is written now. Because there are still outstanding issues and unanswered question, many of the Council are expected to vote against the plan. Mr. Leventhal (Council President) appears to be the 'swing vote'.

You should know what may happen if the Master Plan is voted down. If it is voted down, it is possible that the developers who were going to move the service park will pull out and no longer continue to negotiate that option. The ramifications of that are as follows:

- There will be both industrial and housing in the Metro area rather than just housing.
- The density will remain the same because they will go ahead and develop the land the developers presently own across from Giant.
- The school will need to be purchased by the county because the developers will not buy the school. If the county chooses not to buy the school, which is likely since the County Executive has said he will not support

using public funds for private facilities in the Shady Grove area, then the school might go on the Service Park area or Blueberry Hill.

- All amenities could be lost since there is nothing in the present Master Plan that states contingency amenities...such as a park, community center, ball fields or any Town Center. All these public facilities were to be on the Service Park land.
- Traffic will be even more unbearable with both housing and industrial. No real traffic studies have been done. Only the word of one Park and Planning employee who has assured us that the possible 12,000 new residents will only add 10% to the traffic.

We would like to see a study done by a geotechnical expert who could analyze the Gude landfill site as a possible new location for most of the service park. It has been proposed but is not funded nor is there any attempt to have the Executive fund the study. We should request that the Master Plan be contingent on funding by the Executive for the geotechnical study that determines:

- What are the options with the service park and the costs?
- Can a structure be atop the soil?
- Can EMOC (Ride On bus facility) be moved to Gude along with the busses?

If the service park is moved we want to see a real Town Center created. We would like to see:

- Park area increased to 6 acres with a gazebo and public event area, play areas, paths, and picnic area (like Bethesda's Oak Park)
- Small two level town/rec. center (like Takoma Park) for meetings, classes, and events
- Pedestrian oriented retail area (like Bethesda) with a Starbucks, art theatre, bakery, shops and restaurants.

We also need wording in the Master Plan to implement a Citizen Task Force. This small group of concerned community citizens would work with developers and the county on the design and implementation of the Metro build-out. The Task Force would be a watchdog that the Master Plan is correctly implemented to the standards stated in the Plan. It is feasible to ask for the architectural style we want, the look of the community, and the kind of retail we want.

Some people think that the 26% housing that will be for 'public benefit' is too high. This high percentage has never been required in any other new development and many people think that this type of housing should be distributed throughout the county and not concentrated in Derwood. A fair share that is consistent with the rest of the county would be more acceptable.

We need to request that the county buy the school site if the partnership does not purchase it for the county. The clock is ticking on this and we are only given a limited time to buy the property.

It would be most helpful if you would write the County Council with your final thoughts on the Plan. If there are any points here you feel strongly about you

need to make your concerns voiced. They WILL take notice if enough voters write in.

Check the Council web site for TV broadcast:
county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov or call 240-777-7900.
Diana Heller

Note: For detailed information on the Shady Grove Alliance visit www.gsgca.org.