

Minutes of Parkwood Residents Association Meeting, February 26, 2018

PRA Business

Kira Lueders, president, opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thirty-three members were present and were invited to introduce themselves. The minutes of the October PRA meeting, posted on the website, were approved.

Treasurer's Report and Proposed Budget

Gerald Sharp, PRA Treasurer, presented the 2017 treasurer's report and the proposed budget for 2018. Gerald's detailed spreadsheets, projected on the screen were also printed in the Winter Newsletter. Income has grown during the last ten years due to increased membership. The membership fee has remained \$10 since the PRA's beginning. Last year's 400 PRA members, a record number, represent a significant proportion of the 935 houses in Parkwood. Income for 2017 included membership dues (\$3360) and \$3262 in donations to the beautification fund. Expenses include administration, newsletter printing, meeting room fees and beautification--landscaping, gardening supplies and plants, doggy potty bags & dispensers, maintenance, and the Little Library. The proposed budget for 2018 was explained and approved by vote.

Beautification Report

Gail Dalferes Condrey, Beautification Chair, reported on the committee's accomplishments and plans. Additional doggy potty bag dispensers have been installed. Gail distributed a Parkwood map (also on the website) with doggy bag locations and PRA maintained gardens. Some overgrown bushes on the Saul Road island will be removed and replaced. Gail requested a volunteer to research raingarden requisites with local entities and assist with plans for creation of a raingarden at the intersection of Parkwood and Saul.

Announcements:

March 30, 4:00-7:00. Make and Take Rain Barrel class will be presented at Brookside Gardens (fee \$15).
April 14. Rock Creek Conservancy's 10th Annual Extreme Cleanup.
April 29. Unveiling of Little Library at a community gathering on the Wildwood Rd. island
March meeting (date TBD) of the Beautification Committee. Interested volunteers welcome.

Speaker: Mr. Jim Fustero, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, Solid Waste Services.

Mr. Fustero said that a new company has been awarded the Montgomery County trash collection contract. However, the schedule and most of the service workers remain the same, so it is likely that the only change residents will notice is the color of the trash truck.

Mr. Fustero gave the following tips to enhance the trash pick-up and recycling process:

- Pet owners/walkers: Don't just put the little bag of pet waste in your trash can. Insert the dog waste bag in a bag with other trash.
- Call the Montgomery County 311 number to arrange for pickup of scrap metal and large items.
- Broken blue containers can be replaced. Call 311 if your trash bin has been cracked.

- Separate plastic from paper items in the mixed paper bin. When disposing of cardboard cartons, remove any bubble wrap or Styrofoam. It is helpful, but not required, to break down large cardboard cartons.
- When in doubt about the recyclability of an item, throw it in the trash. Think about reusing or donating items before disposing of them.
- Paper is a valuable commodity at this time; the county sells this resource.
- Shredded paper should be put in a box or paper bag that is securely closed, so that the shredded paper does not fly over the street when the recycle container is emptied into the truck.
- Clean jars and cans before placing them in the recycling bin, but not to the extent that you're using too much of water resources.
- It is preferable to remove tops of jars (they are generally made of a different material). Put lids in recycle bin too.
- Trash should be placed in plastic bags in trash cans with lids. Do not put out trash in plastic bags without the trash can; the bags can be ripped open by animals. Large, commercial-size trash cans are not desirable. The can's capacity should not exceed 45 gallons. A small trash can should be adequate for households that recycle.
- Recyclables should be placed loose inside the blue container, not in plastic bags.
- If in doubt about an item's recyclability, throw it in the trash.
- Do not put hazardous materials such as lithium batteries in the trash. Home Depot will dispose of batteries brought to the store.
- Do not use compostable plastic bags for recyclables. They do not fit in with the Montgomery County scheme and they contaminate the recycle system.

Mr. Fustero described Montgomery County's process for handling trash. When trucks deposit their loads at the Material Resources Facility, yard waste, trash and recyclables are handled separately. Recyclables are mechanically sorted, then sorted by hand. Trash gets transported by train to Dickerson where it is burnt. Energy from this process is captured and sold to PEPCO. Yard Waste is composted and sold. After composting it becomes Compro and Leafpro.

Mr. Fustero handed out flyers describing what items can be recycled as commingled materials and mixed paper. This information and more can be found at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

Old Business: Easing Traffic Concerns at Cedar Lane and Rockville Pike

Kira reported that the PRA has worked with the State to change signaling for southbound Rockville Pike traffic, with a flashing arrow for turning left onto Cedar Lane during non-peak hours. A dedicated right turn lane from Cedar Lane onto northbound Rockville Pike has been approved, though right-turn-on-red at this intersection has been held up due to pedestrian concerns. Kira suggested: maybe a "right-turn-on-red—yield to pedestrians in crosswalk" would work.

The Montgomery County Green Streets Program

Bailey Condrey, Civic Liaison and Past President, presented a brief overview of the Green Streets Program

(GSP). A spokesperson for this program will provide more information at the Spring PRA meeting if membership is interested.

The Green Streets Program, administered by the county's Department of Environmental Protection, is an effort to reduce pollution and storm water regularly flowing into tributaries and from there to the Chesapeake Bay. The GSP typically uses a raingarden for bioretention. Plants in the raingarden pull away water and replenish ground water. Green Streets installations have not been slated for Parkwood at this time, but Kensington Estates is in line for the program. The intersection of Puller Rd. and Parkwood Drive is one proposed location for a raingarden/bio-retention depression.

Bailey has visited and photographed a number of Green Streets installations in Silver Spring. He projected these photos. Several show a "bump out" on the road between the sidewalk and street. When correctly placed, these can slow water moving downhill. Most of the depressions are 12" to 14" in depth.

The impetus for the GSP is the federal Clean Water Act. Montgomery County has been found to be not in compliance with this legislation and must comply with this federal law. The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection has reached a tentative agreement on a program of compliance, but funding issues remain. Bailey is also exploring data on the efficacy of the GSP. He promised that more information would be provided to PRA members through a series of articles in the PRA newsletters.

More Civic News

Local Primary Elections

June 26 is Primary Election Day.

Jeffrey Griffith, Vice President, presented information about the 2018 primary election. This primary is unusual because of the large number of candidates running for each office. Seven candidates are running for MC county executive. A total of 35 candidates are running for at-large positions in the County Council, and 9 candidates for County Council, District 1, our district.

Statewide 209 people are running for office.

Website: http://www.elections.state.md.us/elections/2018primary_candidates

Cell Phone Towers

Jeff also alerted us to a federal requirement re: cell phone towers and proposed changes in the county's zoning regulations. Federal law prohibits local jurisdictions from creating impediments to the placement of cell phone towers. In February the County Executive (CE) submitted to the County Council a proposed Zoning Text Amendment related to the placement of cell phone towers. According to the CE's letter of transmittal, the proposed ZTA would permit "...very limited changes in residential zones," specifically allowing deployment of cell antennas as "limited use only" in those zones where commercial and employment uses are currently allowed. However, the CE indicated in his transmittal letter that there will be a later proposal regarding changes in residential zones. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Dighe, secretary