

President's Message

Ongoing Issues: It has been a busy two months since the January Clarion. First, there were the many issues with the Post Office. There is a separate article about what was done including actions community members can take when a problem occurs. The second issue is a set of six road improvements in Hillandale on New Hampshire Ave centered at the intersection with Powder Mill Road. This issue is still on-going. See the article on page x for more information

Annual Meeting: Our annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21. At the meeting we will vote on the GCCA elected Board members for our fiscal year starting June 1. If you are interested in volunteering for one of the offices, contact the Nominating Committee Chair, Dave Michaels, emailbits@gmail.com. The offices are President, VP, Clarion Editor, Treasurer and Recording Secretary. You can also volunteer to become an area representative. Each area can have three reps.

At the meeting, we will have a speaker covering a topic we think would be of general interest to the community. If you have a topic that you would like presented, please let me know, djwilhelm@verizon.net.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies: The two ribbon cutting events I expected in February have both been delayed. Construction always takes longer than expected. One was the Landing of Silver Spring assisted senior housing at 13908 New Hampshire Ave on the north side of the Cambodian Temple. They are waiting for state approval to open. They keep telling me that they will have an open house; but I have some doubt about that. The other ribbon cutting is for the Hilton Home2 Suite Hotel on Eldon Rd in Hillandale, which now likely will occur in April. Once we hear firm dates, we will post them on our web site and put them on social media.

Adventist Hospital Foundation has announced that their new

(Continued on page 3)

GCCA Officers and Chairs: President Dan Wilhelm, Vice President Marguerite Raaen, Treasurer Mark Pankow, Recording Secretary David Michaels, Clarion Editor Nancy Laich

Upcoming Events Calendar

March

- 12 **GCCA Board Mtg.**, 7:30 pm
(see directions below)
20 **First Day of Spring**

April

- 9 **GCCA Board Mtg.**, 7:30 pm
(see directions below)
15 **Tax Day**
21 **Easter**

May

- 12 **Mother's Day**
14 **GCCA Board Mtg.**, 7:30 pm
(see directions below)
21 **GCCA Annual Meeting**, 7:30pm
(see directions below)



Upcoming **GCCA Board meetings** will be held at 7:30 pm at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, 13925 New Hampshire Ave. Meetings are in the room under the sanctuary and are open to the public. For information contact GCCA President Dan Wilhelm 301-384-2698 or email address djwilhelm@verizon.net

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President's Message Continued

White Oak Medical Center will open on Aug 25, but that might change since it is still six months away. We expect an open house before that date, but don't know when. On Aug 25, patients will wake-up at the hospital in Takoma Park and go to bed at White Oak Medical Center. The name changes at that point. The hospital will be working to minimize the number of patients they need to move.



Views of
the new
White Oak
Medical
Center



Monthly Meetings: It is not possible to include here more than a summary of major items. The best way to stay informed and have a say is to attend the monthly GCCA meetings. All are welcome to attend. See the Calendar on page 1 dates, time and location.

Economic Developement

We got an invitation to attend a Montgomery County Taxpayers League meeting that will be rescheduled due to a snow cancellation. The speaker was Andrew Kleine, Chief Administrative Officer for the County. Seven questions were provided by the League to him. The second question started with: *"How will transition strategies address the 2018 slump in residential and commercial development and foster balanced growth in the residential and commercial property assessment tax base?"*

We have been struggling with the same question, but we have come to the conclusion that the county taxes, fees and costs are so high that it is very difficult to build in parts of the county outside of areas such as Bethesda, where the retail rents or residential purchase prices that can be charged are high. In a profit and loss plan in high cost areas it is easier to recover such high county costs. Housing and non-residential in our area comes at a much lower price than places like Bethesda. Just the county LATIP and Impact Taxes for the White Oak Science Gateway area are \$47K for a single family detached house and \$42K for a townhouse. By comparison, those costs in places like Bethesda are at least \$10K less and can be \$15K less.

The Impact Taxes are the bulk of the costs

and need to be made reasonable. Since non-residential development pays much more in taxes than it receives in services, the county needs to encourage such development. Without non-residential development, the county faces two options: increase residential taxes or reduce services. If we understood correctly the recent operating budget forum, the county is now facing this problem – what services to cut. Developers in our area are finding it very difficult to financially justify building here. We are starting an effort to educate our elected officials to this problem.

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The next issue of the Clarion will be mailed in May 2019. The deadline for submitting news and photographs is Wednesday, April 24, 2019

Contact Editor Nancy Laich at 301-412-5301, or
nmkurgan@aol.com

For inquiries about advertising in the Clarion, please email Dave Michaels at emailbits@gmail.com

Transportation Improvements in Eastern County

We have been working for the better part of a decade to have transportation improvements implemented in Eastern Montgomery County.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) The one improvement that is going forward is US 29 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Construction is underway on the 11 stations for the US29 BRT. DOT indicated at a recent Council meeting that the target date to begin service is May 3, 2020. The corridor will run from the Silver Spring Metro Station to the Burtonsville Park and Ride.

We also want BRT on New Hampshire Ave and Randolph Road. The New Hampshire Ave corridor will start in Colesville and will go to either Langley Park or DC. The Randolph corridor will go from Viva White Oak (see map on page 11) to the White Flint Metro Station. The New Hampshire study is in the County Capital Improvement Budget for 2022-23, but the Randolph corridor is not yet budgeted for design.

LATIP Process We realized that in order to address the large number of other transportation improvements we need in the area, a new process would be required. It took us several years to get such a process approved, which is called the Local Area Transportation Improvement Program (LATIP). The Council approved 27 improvements in that program, including roads, bikeways and transit (local bus, not BRT, except for the transit station in Hillandale). There are other needed projects, but they are not part of LATIP.

The default LATIP process is that developers would pay a fee into a fund to pay the share of the improvements. As an alternative, developers can make the improvement if they want and receive a credit against both the LATIP fee and Transportation Impact Tax that they would need to otherwise pay. We have been encouraging developers to make the improvements since it would be easier for us to work with them. The improvements would be made much sooner (as new development occurs), and according to DOT, the cost would likely be lower.

Hillandale Improvements The Duffie Companies want to make the road improvements in Hillandale on New Hampshire Ave centered at the intersection with Powder Mill Road, as the first LATIP project. (See the January Clarion for more on the Duffie Companies). This intersection has been congested for at least three decades, and neither the State nor County have done anything to address the problem.

As reported in prior Clarions, Duffie will be opening their Hilton Home2 Suites Hotel on Elton Road (see picture below), now slated for April 2019. Duffie has also partnered with the Housing Opportu-

nities Commission (HOC) for 500 residential units and some retail at the Hillandale Gateway Project. Long term, Duffie is considering other possible development projects at that intersection: an upgrade of their Hillandale Shopping Center, and a partnership with the Amalgamated Transit Union.

Duffie hired a Traffic Engineer who studied the traffic situation in Hillandale and worked with MC DOT and

Continued on page 5



Transportation Improvements

(continued)

State Highway Administration (SHA) to develop an agreed-to set of five improvements. A sixth improvement was added to provide traffic calming on Elton Road in response to community concerns about cut-thru traffic. As a result of a November public hearing, DOT approved only two changes (on Powder Mill Road on either side of New Hampshire Ave). DOT indicated that the extension of Elton Rd onto the westbound ramp of the beltway (called a slip ramp, see diagram) and the consolidation of two existing bus stops on northbound New Hampshire required further study. They approved the bus queue jumper southbound at the slip ramp but that can't be built without approval of the slip ramp. In a like manner, they approved the traffic calming measures, but Duffie can't receive a credit without approval of the slip ramp, and thus it will not be built until such approval is given. DOT indicates that their studies will be complete in about six months.



Diagram of Slip ramp

Today, there is no good route for those who use the Hillandale Shopping Center or work in one of the buildings along Elton Road to access the beltway westbound. Many people cut-thru the neighborhood to Powder Mill or travel either north or south on New Hampshire to make a U-turn against congested traffic to reach a beltway ramp. The slip ramp will provide a direct route, thus eliminating that part of the neighborhood cut-thru traffic (there is still the second cut-thru pattern to Riggs Road), reduce the traffic volume at the Powder Mill/NH intersection, and allow traffic signals to provide more green time to New Hampshire Ave traffic.

There are two bus stops on northbound New Hampshire, one just before Powder Mill and the other a short walk away next to the Safeway. The traffic studies indicate that the intersection is not currently congested, but everyone who drives northbound during the evening peak period knows that road is severally congested and that it backs half way to Langley Park. If the first bus stop is eliminated, it will allow many more vehicles to travel through the intersection, including the large number of vehicles that exit from the shopping center.

The neighbors behind the shopping center have two cut-thru problems. The slip ramp will largely eliminate the first one (going westbound on the beltway). Much of that neighborhood is in Prince George's county. PG County recently installed speed humps that will reduce speeding and somewhat reduce the volume for both patterns. The proposed design added traffic calming measures in the Montgomery County section. MC DOT identified a number of other steps that could be taken to reduce the second set of cut-thru volumes further, but they would have a major impact on the residents who live there. Most of these measures would need to be done by PG County.

Industrial Parkway A preliminary plan and site plan application is with the Planning Staff to redevelop the long empty building at the intersection of US29/Old Columbia Pike and Industrial Parkway. The main issue is the road right-of-way (ROW) needed for the LATIP improvements to both roads. SHA has been relying on their outdated 1995 interchange (grade separated) design and there is no funding for any interchange, so the intersection (at grade) just needs to be improved. There are four ROW widths being discussed: 80 feet, 100 feet (in Master Plan), 132 feet (from the Viva White Oak Plan) and 120 feet. While this question is still being discussed, it looks like it will be 120 feet. That is enough space to provide four lanes on Industrial Pkwy (one LATIP project) and bikeway along it (another LATIP project). Additional space is needed for turn lanes at Old Columbia Pike and US29.

Actions to Take if you have Issues with Post Office Service

The Greater Colesville Citizens Association (GCCA) held a meeting for the broader community on January 8, 2019 concerning issues with the 20904/20905 postal service and the outside appearance of the Colesville Post Office. Lisa Hatton, Postmaster of the main Silver Spring Post Office and its five branches, attended. Three other employees from the Silver Spring Post Office accompanied Lisa. The room was packed with a large number of residents from the extended area who attended and expressed their frustrations about a large number of issues. Christa Burton, postal liaison for Congressman Jamie Raskin, was also at the meeting.

Apparently the problems we have been facing are widespread. At least four of Silver Spring Post Offices and some outside of Silver Spring also have similar issues. Christa Burton reported the Maryland Representatives for the area and Maryland Senators have received a lot of complains about the postal service. She also said the staff for these representatives have met with the postal regional manager and at least two postmasters, one being Lisa Hatton.

Lisa Hatton determined the best way to address all issues is to communicate them to Frank Gilliard, of her staff, and he will deal with the appropriate personnel within the Post Office. The best way to communicate with him is via email at frank.gilliard@usps.gov. This method will leave a paper trail of complaints and his responses. In the email, provide your name, address, phone number, post office/route and date(s) the issue occurred. To identify the post office/route, provide the full nine digits, since the last four identify the route and therefore the carrier.

One neighbor found a package sitting in the middle of the street. Mr. Gilliard asks that when this situation occurs you not deliver it, but rather take a picture of the item and email it to him and Christa Burton. Mr. Gilliard will have a supervisor or he himself will retrieve the item from you to determine who is responsible, and make any and all corrections regardless of shipping agency (FedEx, UPS, Amazon, etc). Additionally, Mr. Gilliard has instructed the supervisor of our postal annex facility from which our mail deliveries originate to instruct the carriers to take pictures of any and all parcels that they come across to help identify the courier service to get this corrected.

If your individual problem is not addressed in a reasonable time, please contact Dan Wilhelm with GCCA (djwilhelm@verizon.net), Peter Myo Khin with Tamarack Civic Association (pmyokhin@verizon.net), and Christa Burton in Congressman Raskin's office (christa.burton@mail.house.gov) and provide a copy of the email string.

Information and Requests from the Postmaster

- We are committed to providing adequate customer service and therefore carriers will be re-briefed on policy. There should never be an instance of mail or parcels being dropped and left on the ground. The carriers will be reminded of delivering the right mail to the correct house. The delivery times will vary and can be delivered as late as 7:00 PM, but we strive to have all letter mail delivered by 6:00 PM.
- All mail-hold orders placed with the Postal Service will receive the utmost urgency and will be honored. Requests can be placed in your out-going mail, handed to your carrier, or submitted online. The resolution of this problem will entail the carrier making an alert/reminder card that is placed on the internal slot for your address. The delivery supervisor will brief/announce every day to look at hold order requests to be sure those are honored. Certainly we would like to know immediately when a customer's request is not honored. We take this seriously and we are committed to providing excellent service. Honoring a hold mail request is very important to us because we know the concern of identity theft.
- Additional custodians have been hired to maintain a neat and professional appearance of all of the Colesville facilities to include (1) daily policing for trash and debris, (2) cutting the grass and trimming of hedges and pruning of trees, and (3) if necessary, contracting out the grounds upkeep. Rather than having multiple people complain about this, Dan Wilhelm, GCCA President, has volunteered to contact Frank as needed concerning the appearance issue.

A few Words from Kristine Donohue

Principal of Cannon Road Elementary School

Professionally, I possess over 23 years of experience in the field of education. I am a Nationally Board Certified Elementary Teacher and a licensed School Administrator.

I feel we are in one of the most exciting times to be an educator. We are facing many challenges, yet we have some of the best opportunities to engage our learners and the community in shaping our students for their future. So, how are we doing that at Cannon Road? We have several new initiatives that are collectively building the success of our students. First, all students in K-5th grade are receiving a new learning structure called, "Cougar Time." Each day, every student is having the opportunity for intervention or enrichment in math or reading based on their needs. This differentiated and rigorous structure is enabling us to prepare ALL of our students with extra practice and knowledge in order to increase their success in school.

Second, in the summer of 2018 we built a MakerSpace with the help of several Valencia Citizens Association and GCCA members! This classroom is a dedicated space with readily available materials that act as a motivation for inquiries and inventions. It inspires integrative learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. In addition to launching a MakerSpace we also have two new after-school programs that began in the Fall of 2018. One after-school program, developed by community members along with support from me and classroom teachers, is the MakerSpace after school club. The second program run by me and teachers is Genius Hour. In this club, students research questions they are pondering and take their learning to create projects such as reports, commercials, posters or books. These clubs are being attended by over eighty students and I was able to purchase an activity bus to take students home after their club, providing opportunities for ALL interested students to attend.

I am thrilled to share with you this small sample of the wonderful things happening at Cannon Road Elementary School. I believe that Cannon Road is a school full of learning, creativity, laughter and excellence. It is a place that embodies an equal partnership between school, home and the greater community in order to provide students with opportunity, access and reaching their highest levels of learning.

MakerSpace Club

Volunteers developed and ran the MakerSpace club on electronics. A Elegoo kit was used to provide electronic parts where the students build and controlled a blinking light, a stop light and a weather station that measured temperature and humidity. A related product call ADA Box was used by the students to build a robot/car, including using a computer to change the software and smart phone to drive the robot. The students had lots of fun competing with each other racing the cars around a course. The volunteers came from Valencia CA, GCCA, Leisure World and University of Maryland students/staff.

MCPS produced a special video was about both the MakerSpace and Genius Hour. Enjoy the video at <https://youtu.be/L0vqAezNqMw>, plus it can also be viewed on the MCPS Twitter page.

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GCCA Area Representatives

(3 representatives per area)

1 Fred Pulliam	144 Bonifant Rd.	602-0825	19 Mark Pankow	908 Hobbs Dr.	703-851-1315
1 Deborah Pilliam	144 Bonifant Rd.	240-440-1758	20 Chris Naughten	800 Midland Rd	758-3633
2 Open			21 Jay Hagler	1325 Crockett Ln	240-994-8993
3 Marguerite Raaen	14404 Sandy Ridge Rd	384-3307	22 Open		
3 Fred Stichnoth	14105 Cricket Ln	706-6828	23 Dan Wilhelm	904 Cannon Rd.	384-2698
4 Henry Morrow	13812 Mills Avenue	384-0827	24 Open		
5 Paul Daisey	13910 Overton Ln	651-7148	25 Ed Weiler	1008 Mondrian Terr.	236-5956
6 Bill Backof	13814 Shannon Drive	384-7354	26 Beverly Roof	12928 Allerton Lane	384-7247
7 Open			26 Bob Peters	1010 Cannon Rd.	384-4410
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9 Michael Persh	208 Montvale Terr	879-4560	28 Otto E. Lewis	12617 Billington Rd.	384-0567
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11 David Michaels	508 Hawkesbury Lane	622-1805	29 Alcira Groomes	204 Valley Brook Dr.	625-8919
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13 Open					
14 Robert Bartol	224 Springloch Road	622-5879			
15 Ken Himes	12704 Hammonton Rd.	622-3690			
16 Sharon Brown					
17 Pat Corey	41 Shaw Ave	622-5339			
18 Ray Rye	12820 Baker Dr.	622-2276			

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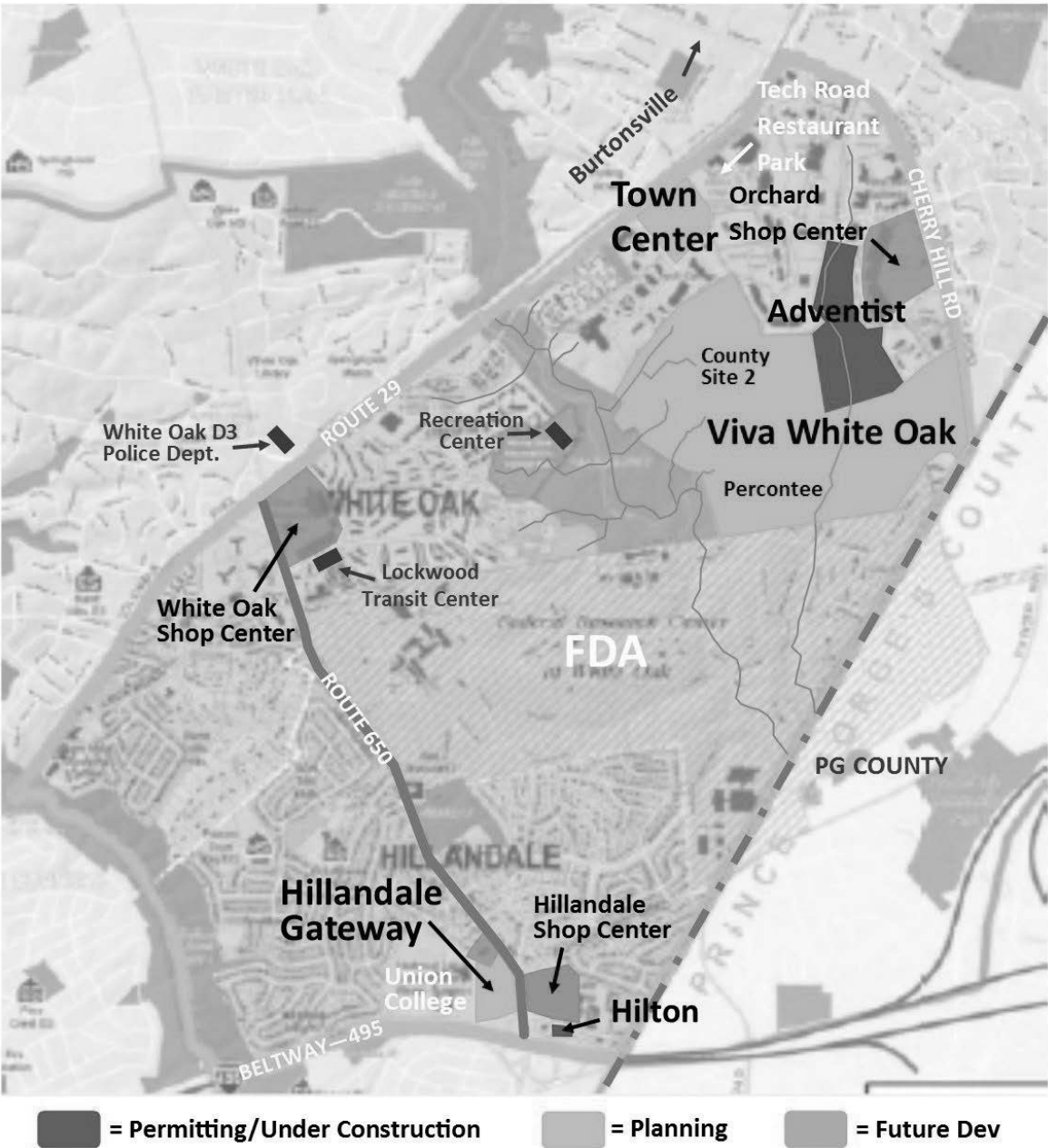
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White Oak Science Gateway (WOSG) Master Plan



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