

September 2010

Situated in the green hills & valleys of Sligo Creek & its tributaries abutting the burgeoning downtown Silver Spring

Seven

Evanswood



**CITIZEN'S ASSOCIATION
SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND**

First Fall Meeting will be held at NEW Civic Center, Ellsworth Room, Thursday, Sept. 30, 2010 7 – 9 pm. **JOIN US!**

Join Us. Renew Annual Dues. \$10 per household, (or \$5 for single household, and seniors)

We welcome your participation as vital to the pulse and personality of our community. See form on back.

Dale Drive Improvements: See inside for more info.

Chelsea School Task Force Report: See inside for more info.

Purple Line Update. See inside for more info.

Call for Resident Volunteers "Envisioning SOECA"
See inside for more info.

www.soeca.org | email: soeca.board@gmail.com

SOECA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

List Serve Resident Participants:

> 43 New members Jan–Aug 2010

Members in Good Standing:

> 180 FY2010 Member Dues Paid to Date

> 340 Member Households

Households in SOECA

> 750 (approximately)

Please invite your neighbors to JOIN US!

SOECA Boundaries in include:

Colesville Road on the West, Cedar and Fenton Streets on the South, Bonifant and Wayne, and on the East, and Franklin & Caroline Avenues on the North.

Fall 2010 Schedule

Regular Residents Meetings

Thursday, September 30

Thursday, November 4

New Civic Center, 7–9 pm

AGENDA Sept 30th

Welcome & Greetings 7 pm

Meeting Opens 7:15

Announcements

- Interages, Tutoring Program
- Good Neighbor Awards
- Membership & Dues

Neighborhood Advocacy

Reports & Updates...

- Chelsea School Sale / Task Force Report
- Purple Line & the 'Proposed' Wayne Ave Station
- Dale Drive Pedestrian Improvements
- DOT Meeting Sept 29
- Fillmore Music Center

Business Meeting:

- Membership Report
- Treasurers Report
- List Serve Report
- Old Business
- New Business
- Approval of May Minutes

Adjourn 9:00 pm sharp

Special Workgroup Meeting

Councilmember Ervin, DOT, SOECA, Woodside Forest, Woodside Park Civics

Wednesday, September 29

Silver Spring Library, 7- 9 pm

Agenda: Dale & Rt 29

Topic: Intersection Options

Dale Drive CIP “Road Widening”

Over ten years ago— the County, in its 1999 Master Plan —added another lane (4-across, instead of 3) and sidewalks, at the Dale intersection (both East & West sides) at Mrs. K’s Restaurant. The widening construction was to have started in Fall 2010. However during the Spring Budget reconciliation on May 20, the funds were moved to the following years budget. The County has delayed the construction of this project for one year to FY 2012 (Fall 2011).

SOECA, Woodside Park and Woodside Forest Citizen’s Association’s and residents have lobbied long and hard over the last 3-5 years to NOT widen, but to consider low cost alternatives instead. One such success in this regard was the STATE traffic engineers changed the WEST side signalization and mitigated traffic backups. The County’s DOT then cancelled the lane widening on the West side. (Lowering the cost from over \$4 million to \$2.3 million for the East side.)

Residents of SOECA have lobbied to use the one-year budget postponement to entice DOT to consider low cost alternatives, given the tight budget times and shortage of county coffers, asking to solve the complex and unsafe intersection problems that co-exist on Dale and on Colesville Road.

It is in this spirit that Councilmember Ervin graciously offered and organized the DOT decision makers to attend an SOECA meeting—as a Workgroup session—

to consider what the possible community alternatives for signal changes and lane remarking, and how to mitigate the Toll Road closure —that closes access to Colesville Road permanently into a dead end driveway/parking area—that brings all restaurant service vehicles into the neighborhood and onto Kingsbury.

Wednesday, Sept. 29 meeting AGENDA

Project Overview / DOT , Planning Board Review(2008/ Planning Staff, Community Comments /Community Proposal, Discussion/Work session, Next Steps

Joint Community Proposal / Intersection Options (SOECA, Woodside Park, Woodside Forest)

Explore other options: modified road alignment without adding the additional lane

- > Two lanes: straight/left-turn lane and right-turn lane
- > No right-turn green arrow
- > Re-strip current lane widths (narrower) to align E-W
- > Sign: “No Right Turn on Red”
- > Potential lane divide island at intersection (space permitting)
- > Keep the sidewalk in CIP project
- > Keep Mrs. Kay’s Toll Road entrance open
- > Re-examine the timing of the Dale Drive and Colesville Road lights in all directions

Other Community Concerns/Needs on Dale

- > Dale Drive sidewalk: Georgia Ave to Colesville Rd
- > Dale Drive pedestrian islands (reflectors, “greening,” and possible bike cuts, or bike lanes)

Dale Drive Traffic Calming Project Crosswalks & Bumpouts on Dale Dr.

This project is completed. Sept 2010.

See SOECA website for more information.

Purple Line Summer Update

The County Council approved the Purple Line Functional Master Plan as expected on July 27 it included among other amendments, a statement (generated by Councilmembers Ervin & Leventhal, after touring Wayne with advocates against the station & transit oriented development up-zoning)

that there is “no intent or desire” to change the single-family residential zoning near Wayne & Dale if a station is built there. The M-NCPPC approved the plan on Sept. 8. Documents, letters, and the Functional Master Plan are on the SOECA website.

SOECA also responded to the MTA “Purple Line Progress” Summer 2010 Newsletter, Vol. 6. requesting SOECA representatives in any work group sessions regarding the proposed stop on Wayne Avenue, at Dale Drive, which abuts and adjoins our association’s boundaries. (Naming 2 residents (pro and con) and the SOECA President.)

Tutors and Mentors Needed Help boost a child’s skills and self-esteem! **Interages**, a nonprofit in Montgomery County, needs volunteers to tutor and mentor children at local elementary, middle, and high schools. With just one hour/week, you can make a real difference in the life of a child. Volunteers provide friendship, encouragement, and may help with reading, word games, crafts, and cultural activities. Training, all materials, and on-site supervision provided. Contact Tricia Wilson at 301-949-3551, x30 or wilson@interagesmd.org for more information.

Chelsea School SOECA Task Force Report

In the Spring of 2010, SOECA learned that the Chelsea School had entered into a contract to sell its property on Pershing Drive to EYA Properties and that EYA planned to build 76 townhouses on the site and submit a request to rezone the Chelsea School site (5 acres) from R-60, single family residential, to RT-15, the highest density townhouse zoning category. At its May 26 meeting, the SOECA membership expressed its significant concerns about increasing the zoning density at the Chelsea School site and formed the Chelsea School Task Force to gather information about EYA's plans and report findings and recommendations to the SOECA executive committee.

After studying the zoning rules; learning more about EYA's proposed development; meeting with EYA and Chelsea School; contacting homes nearest the site; and talking with planners from the Montgomery County Park and Planning Commission and with other sources, the task force recommended preserving the existing zoning and opposing the rezoning proposed for the Chelsea School site.

The task force believes that the *existing* residential zoning in our neighborhood, as provided in the North and West Silver Spring Master Plan, should be preserved. R-60 zoning allows a reasonable level of development within our neighborhood while avoiding the adverse impacts that come from development at the much higher RT-15 density that is being proposed..

EYA's plans for 76 townhomes, each with a 2-car garage tightly placed on the site equates to a 3-fold increase in density over what is deemed consistent with the current zoning and the current neighborhood Master Plan (The official guide used by the

Planning Department t.) The additional cars, traffic, utility load, visual impact, and environmental degradation caused by adding so many additional structures will be felt most acutely by the residents on Springvale Road, Springvale Lane, and on Pershing Drive and Ellsworth Drive between Cedar and Dale. These neighbors were polled, and they are overwhelmingly opposed to the rezoning.

The proposed townhouse development also represents an incursion into our neighborhood of increased density that is more equivalent to zoning of townhomes the Silver Spring Central Business District. The accompanying change in zoning creates a precedent that will be used to allow other changes in zoning in our neighborhood.

The proposed development and EYA rezoning request also would pose challenges for our schools and neighborhood. Unlike single family homes, EYA's developer told us in May that their townhomes attract "single working people and empty nesters" not families with children, which does not address our neighborhood elementary school's need for higher enrollment so as to help anchor the quality of its academic programs. Also, the several hundred residents of the townhouse development will have their own homeowner's association, and will represent a large voting block on issues that may not necessarily align with those of the larger community, such as the appropriateness of the current neighborhood traffic restrictions.

For all of these reasons, the resident task force believes the rezoning must be opposed. At the September 30 meeting SOECA residents will be asked to vote to support and endorse the Task Force's recommendations.

Special Summer Meeting of SOECA Executive Committee considered the Chelsea School Task Force Findings.

At the May Meeting, the outgoing leadership of SOECA and residents voted to assign the incoming Executive Committee full authority to review the Task Force Report and reply to EYA prior to their July 28 feasibility period deadline. The Executive Committee endorsed the task force's recommendations to maintain the existing R-60 zoning as appropriate density defined by the Master Plan for our neighborhood. Immediately impacted neighbors on all abutting and adjoining streets to the Chelsea property were polled and the majority wish to maintain current density and support the Task Force position. The SOECA letter to EYA can be found on the SOECA website.

SOECA May 26, 2010 Meeting Minutes

President Mark Gabriele called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

Election of SOECA Officers.

The slate of candidates was presented and approved by acclamation: President: Kathleen Samiy; Vice Presidents: Vicki Warren and Carolyn Michel; Treasurer: Bill Kaupert; Secretary: Tom Armstrong

Future use of the current Silver Spring Library Building.

The SOECA resolution passed in April asking that the County retain the building and use it as a "community building" was modified to ask that it be used as a "community recreation building" to distinguish it from, e.g., the new Silver Spring Civic Building, a "community" building. The library parcel is owned by the County, but the adjacent "overflow" parking lot, parks and another parcel are owned by the County Department of Parks. There are no County recreation facilities in Silver Spring inside the Beltway. The idea of combining all three parcels was discussed.

EYA and Chelsea. Tony Messina (Chelsea School principle), Bob Youngentob and colleagues (EYA developers), and Rich Romer (assistant to Councilmember Valerie Ervin) attended for the presentation by Chelsea and EYA of the proposed townhouse development on the Chelsea School property.

Mr. Messina outlined Chelsea's decision to relocate, their investigation of the alternatives for selling the property, and their

selection of EYA as the buyer. The Chelsea School has used the site since 1990, and has owned it since 2001. Currently, few Montgomery County students attend the school, and other jurisdictions are choosing to serve the students' needs within their schools. Thus for economic reasons and to better serve their population, Chelsea has decided to relocate. After

marketing the property to other schools and to national building companies, they approached EYA.

EYA is the contract purchaser, but EYA does not own the property and is in a feasibility study period of several months, ending in late July, to evaluate the site and the approval process. The process would take two years, during which Chelsea would continue to operate on the site.

EYA builds townhouse developments, with examples in Silver Spring that include the townhouses at Cameron Street & Second Ave, behind the McDonalds on Colesville Road, and at the National Park Seminary on Linden Lane.

Mr. Youngentob described the proposed development as a buffer between downtown and the SOECA single-family neighborhood, and a reasonable alternative to having another school purchase the site. (The current special exception under which Chelsea operates permits up to 200 students. A religious school would be allowed up to 423 students.) It would include 76 townhouses, including ten

moderately-priced dwelling units (MPDUs). The historic Riggs-Thompson house would be retained, as required by its historic easement, but its modern attachment would be torn down. Areas of green space, including the Riggs-Thompson area, would comprise 40% of the property and would be available to the neighborhood.

Townhouse rows would be about 40 ft. wide and 2 ½ stories tall, and would include seven units, each with a two-car garage. Street parking would accommodate 25-30 more cars. The rows would face either mews (lawns between buildings) or the street, and would back onto driveways giving access to the garages. The architectural style is open to discussion.

In their traffic analysis, EYA estimates 99 daily trips (leaving and returning) generated by the townhouse development, 201 by the current Chelsea School, and up to 663 by a large religious school. They are not proposing to change the current traffic patterns. The site layout shown mitigates traffic effects by eliminating access to Springvale Rd. based on the reaction at the April SOECA meeting. An internal loop street would connect to Pershing and to Ellsworth. Approval by the Fire Marshal for the number and placement of access will be required.

The rezoning process would take place in 2010-11. The school would operate through the 2011-12 school year. Construction would

take place in 2012-14. All construction parking and storage would be confined to the site.

A lengthy Q&A session followed. A key topic was the effects on the current traffic plan and how to mitigate them. EYA is trying to keep cut-through traffic to a minimum, but there are limits to what can be done. A second topic concerned alternatives to the 76-townhouse development. EYA will not consider a smaller number of units. Tony Messina was asked whether there was interest from other schools and answered that two prominent schools were interested, but neither was a religious school.

With the EYA representatives out of the room, a resolution was passed

- > Expressing SOECA's significant concerns about changing the zoning from R-60, single-family residential, to RT-15, the highest-density townhouse zoning, because of the (1) density of the proposed development, (2) the precedent for the neighborhood of allowing a change in zoning, and (3) the elimination of Cedar Street as a buffer;
- > Forming a task force to stay

abreast of developments involving the Chelsea School site, to learn about the process and its timing, to evaluate and review the information about and the options for the site, and to make reports and recommendations to the membership and Executive Committee; and

- > Authorizing the Executive Committee to act between civic association meetings to take all appropriate actions to protect the community's options and interests in response to developments regarding the Chelsea School site.

Anne Spielberg was named to head the task force, and several members volunteered to join.

EYA then rejoined and answered more questions. One topic raised was the possibility of supporting the zoning change in exchange for EYA's support using the current library as a recreation center. They said they would argue for that use, but that their zoning change application was a separate process.

Old Business.

Crosswalks on Dale Dr., including bumpouts, are being installed

during the summer. Dale Dr. is an "arterial road;" these roads have speed limits of 30 to 40 mph in the new road code. We can request that Dale be reclassified as "minor arterial," which has 25 to 35 mph limits. It was suggested that this request be taken up in the fall.

New Business.

The Association presented Mark Gabriele with gifts, and members thanked him, for six remarkable years of service to our civic association, including four years as president and two years as vice president.

Business Meeting:

Bill Kaupert reported that SOECA has \$5,180 in its checking account. As of 2/28, we had \$2,265 in our CD, earning 0.1% interest, maturing on 3/21/10. Three new households have joined SOECA, and there have been 30 renewals since. 1/14.

A proposal was approved to correct mistakes in the April 2010 meeting minutes and publish the corrected minutes and newsletter on the SOECA.org website for the record.

Meeting adjourned @10:43 pm

SHOUT OUT FOR YOUR EXPERTISE & PARTICIPATION IN AN SOECA TASK FORCE

"Envision SOECA" The new Board encourages the Seven Oaks-Evanswood residents to envision the neighborhoods specialness, its location, its sense of place and the future character and quality of life. In this regard, we are considering several possible activities over the next year. We welcome your participation and invite you to contact us at soeca.board@gmail.com to help with these activities and/or suggest more ideas.

- > Holding a neighborhood charette in partnership with the Planning Department;
- > Working with the County to encourage truly smart growth within our borders;
- > Lobbying to convert the old Library building to a recreation center,
- > Returning the Library "overflow" parking lot to Ellsworth Park green space;
- > Re-shading our streets by replanting street trees;
- > Remove invasive vines from our majestic over-story trees
- > Collaborating with the County on enhancing walk-ability and bike-ability;
- > Planning a spring SOECA picnic.

Seven Oaks Evanswood
Citizens Association
Silver Spring, Maryland
www.soeca.org

SOECA Officers

Kathleen Samiy, President
Mark Gabriele, Past-President
Vicky Warren, Vice-President
Carolyn Michele, Vice-President
Tom Armstrong, Secretary
Bill Kaupert, Treasurer
Resident Volunteers
Jean Cavanaugh, PrezCo Liaison
Jonathan Bernstein, List Serve
Charles Wolff, SOECA Historian

Contact SOECA:
soeca.board@gmail.com

TWO WAYS TO JOIN SOECA'S LISTSERV:

(1) Via email

- A) Send an e-mail to: soeca-subscribe@yahoogroups.com with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.
- B) The ListServ moderator will email you asking for your name and address by response email, adding you after you respond.
- C) You will then receive a confirmation e-mail from "YahooGroups."

(2) Via Yahoo Groups at <http://groups.yahoo.com/>

(Use this method, if you already have a Yahoo account set up)

- A) Find SOECA and click "Join this Group."
- B) Fill in the form, including the email address you wish to use, adding a comment about yourself and why you would like to join the group. Click on "Join."
- C) The ListServ moderator will email you asking for your name and address by a personal response email adding you after you respond.
- D) You will then receive a confirmation e-mail from "YahooGroups."

Once you have joined....Post messages to the community by sending an e-mail to: soeca@egroups.com or soeca@yahoogroups.com

SOECA Membership 2010/2011 Renew Annual Dues

Send this slip plus \$10 annual household dues (\$5 for senior citizens and single members) to:
Bill Kaupert, SOECA Treasurer, 9222 Manchester Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home) _____ Cell) _____ Work) _____

Would you like to receive the SOECA newsletter by: Email? Printed ? Both? (circle choices)

If by email, please print email address here: _____

Are you registered on the SOECA Yahoo Groups List Serve? Yes No (please circle one)

Would you like to receive SOECA Board e-communication? Yes No (please circle one)
If yes, please print email address here: _____

NOTE: Resident email addresses, street and phone numbers are held in strict confidence, they are not shared.

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Seven Oaks Evanswood
Citizen's Association
Silver Spring, MD 20910