



September 2020 Issue

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, October 7th, from 7-9pm via Zoom. Link and details will be sent via Listserve a week before. Please signup if you haven't already – instructions are below.

2020-21 SOECA Membership Meeting Dates

Meetings will be held remotely via Zoom, until further notice.

Wednesday, October 7th, 2020 from 7-9pm

Tuesday, November 17th, 2020 from 7-9pm

Saturday, January TDB, 2021

Wednesday, March 10th, 2021 from 7-9pm

Wednesday, May 19th, 2021 from 7-9pm



Message from the Board

These past six months have been trying on so many levels. However, we have seen the neighborhood come alive both in person (while socially distanced!) and virtually, via the listserv.

As we move further into uncharted territory this fall and winter, we the Board are looking to support the community and help encourage involvement. In such an isolating time, it is important to come together for important causes and to support one another.

If you have ideas you would like to see enacted or would like to take action such as heading or joining a committee, helping us out with Social Media, etc, please contact us at soeca.board@gmail.com.

We are thankful to you all and look forward to seeing what we can all accomplish, individually and as a whole. — Your SOECA Board



Halloween is Not Cancelled!

The Social Committee has been devising ways for us to have some fun as a neighborhood...

While we cannot have our annual Autumn Neighborhood Party, we are hosting our first ever **Halloween Haunted Home Decoration Competition!** Start brainstorming ideas for your yard/house/door/windows... we will create a walking map of those SOECA members who wish to participate, and the neighborhood and Committee will vote for the ghoulish winners! Multiple categories TBD: Creativity, Humor, Themed, Big and Small endeavors... There will be fun! There will be prizes! There will be glory!

In addition, if you would like to see a – socially distanced and masked – parade for kids, dogs, and adults, let us know! Please contact the head of the Social Committee: Lynn and Tad Grodzki lynngrodzki@gmail.com

SOECA Officers

Michael Bufalini, President
Chris Reynolds, Vice President
David Hartmann, Treasurer
Claire Zietz, Secretary

Board Actions Since May Meeting

Discussions for remote meeting possibilities for 2020-21 and Board elections

Featured Speakers and Highlights for October Meeting

1. Board Elections for 2020-2021
2. Remote meeting options and discussion
3. Speakers: TBD*

**If you have suggestions, ideas, or would like to speak yourself, please contact us at soeca.board@gmail.com*

In This Newsletter

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3. Halloween Announcement
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7. Membership Signup

SOECA Boundaries

Colesville Rd on the West;
Cedar and Fenton Sts on the South;
Bonifant St and Wayne Ave on the East;
Franklin and Caroline Aves on the North.



Check Us Out Online!

www.soeca.org
[facebook.com/SOECASilverSpring](https://www.facebook.com/SOECASilverSpring)
twitter.com/soecatweet



Listserv Signup Instructions

Go to <https://groups.io/g/SOECA/join> and fill in your email address; OR
Email SOECA+subscribe@groups.io and include your name address in the email.



Do you have ideas for our next newsletter?
Want to send a Shout-out to someone special?

We'd love to hear from you! Send an email to soeca.board@gmail.com



COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND ISSUE REPRESENTATIVES

Bus Rapid Transit CAT – Brian Feit
Environment – Anne Vorce
Butterfly Garden – Betsy Mendelsohn
Mosquito Abatement Project – Karen Kuehl and Carol Leventhal
Land Use – Chris Johansson
Membership Committee – David Hartmann
Montgomery County Civic Federation– Jean Cavanaugh
Purple Line CAT and Wayne Ave Group – Erin Johansson
Safety Committee – Lynn Bailes
Social Committee– Lynn and Tad Grodzki
Technology Committee – Jonathan Bernstein
Traffic Committee – Jean Cavanaugh

OUR ENVIRONMENT: Summer into Fall

The summer saw so many people enjoying our park, and Sligo Creek picnickers, dog walkers, and bicyclists are everywhere, as is the waft of wonderful barbeque and other grilling at sundown. The fox and deer families have been out and about. The owls are around. The fireflies made an appearance, although it seemed like they weren't as dense as usual. The song of the frogs has been loud and somehow reassuring. Our transition from summer into autumn appears to have been demarked by what is called a 500 year rain event, when we got over half of foot of rain in a short amount of time. We are not in drought. Everything looks remarkably green, the flowers that survived the summer are lush, and most insects are plentiful.



Sweep the Creek Fall 2020. Please note that Friends of Sligo Creek's (FOSC) twice a year Sweep the Creek will be

"self-serve" this year. Please see the FOSC website fosc.org or the kiosk near the tennis courts off Bennington Lane for more details. Thanks to everyone for being stewards of our Creek and watershed.

Plastics ! Plastic pollution issues have popped up around us: synthetic turf is proposed for Ellsworth in DTSS and is being increasingly used casually despite environmentalists' concerns (including the Sierra Club Montgomery County, FOSC, Stormwater Partners; Neighbors of the Northwest Branch, Safe and Healthy Playing Fields); and the County Council is about to

consider plastics legislation tied to zero waste. FOSC held a talk earlier this year by an American University expert (Dr. Jesse Meillor) who is researching the microplastics issue locally. She noted that the harm to freshwater has not been well-understood, and a lot of the research has looked at oceans. As she pointed out, plastics are produced on land and so have perhaps an even more powerful impact on fresh water. Her research is focused on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, which has considerable scope for the study of land-water interaction because of its unusually large ratio of land to water.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: Putting Action into Motion



DTSS Redevelopment: Proposed Ellsworth abandonment, redesign of the area.

The County continues its process to evaluate and make decisions on developer Foulger Pratt's proposals to redo Downtown Silver Spring. On September 14th, a Hearing Examiner from the County's Department of Transportation heard arguments about whether the County Council should approve of an abandonment of Ellsworth Drive. The Hearing Examiner will make a recommendation to the County Executive, who will then recommend whether the County Council should approve that Ellsworth be abandoned.



County Council: Zero waste and plastics legislation are being considered.



Martha Gudelsky Child Development Center:

The developer for the Martha B Gudelsky Child Development Center at the old Silver Spring Library is proceeding with approvals for the conditional use of the residentially-zoned property. The center will accommodate up to 180 students plus staff. They are building an addition on the back of the old library. The Planning Board will review their plan on September 24, Item 4 on their agenda. You can read the Planning Staff report and recommendations here: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/a.Gudelsky-Child-Care-Final-Rpt-w-attachments-20200904.pdf>

The County's Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH) will hold a public hearing on the Gudelsky Child Development Center zoning on October 5th at 9:30 am. The details of the hearing, which will be held remotely, can be found online here:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OZAH/Resources/Files/pdf/2020/Hearing%20Notice%20CU%2020-08.pdf>

SOECA is on record supporting this project.



New Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Master Plan: The Planning Department is drafting an update to the 2000 Silver Spring Central Business District plan, pulling in adjacent

residential communities including up to Woodside Parkway, Dartmouth, Bonifant and Queen Anne's streets in SOECA as well as parts of East Silver Spring and Woodside Park. There is a map on the website.

The goal is to accommodate more dense housing, given the location of our communities within walking distance to future Purple Line stations. The planners are seeking community input and invite all to attend the next round of virtual listening sessions on October 5th at noon and October 13th at 7:00 pm.

Planning staff encourages us to share ideas, questions and concerns about both the downtown and the residential neighborhoods with Montgomery Planning Staff. You can email planner Atara Margolies at Atara.Margolies@montgomeryplanning.org

Planners will also come to your section of the neighborhood to meet outside and tour the area. Sign up for listening sessions and find out more here:

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/downcounty/silver-spring/silver-spring-downtown-plan/>



Planning Department Closing on Update to County General Plan: The Planning Department is finishing up its draft update to the County's General Plan "Wedges and

Corridors" and will send it to the County Council for review, public hearings and passage over the next six months. The plan is called "Thrive Montgomery" <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/master-plan-list/general-plans/thrive-montgomery-2050/>

and focuses on achieving more equitable communities, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. One emphasis is creating "complete communities" along transit corridors (all Bus Rapid Transit routes, Purple Line route, and River Road) to decrease single auto travel. "Thrive Montgomery" has over 100 action items and staff are working to complete an implementation plan. See the working draft below; action items start on page 15.

[https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-](https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Final-staff-report-vision-goals-policies-and-actions-for-6-11-20-PB-.pdf)

[content/uploads/2020/06/Final-staff-report-vision-goals-policies-and-actions-for-6-11-20-PB-.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OZAH/Resources/Files/pdf/2020/Hearing%20Notice%20CU%2020-08.pdf)



Flash BRT: You may have seen the completed stations built to serve the county's new bus rapid transit system, Flash. The county plans to launch the Flash BRT service soon – hopefully this fall. The closest station to SOECA is near Fenton St. on Colesville Rd. For more information, see <https://www.ridetheflash.com/us29/>



Shared Streets: Several streets in the neighborhoods around downtown Silver Spring have taken advantage of the county's new Shared Streets initiative. Neighbors can apply for a permit from the county to close a street to through traffic for a period of time, and to allow recreational use in the street. The county provides signage and equipment needed to block the street. To find out more including the Shared Streets permit application, go to <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot/sharedstreets/>



495/270 Toll Lanes: The Maryland Department of Transportation continues its process toward building managed (toll) lanes on both 495 and 270 using a Public Private Partnership (P3) to fund the project. MDOT has released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and is accepting public comment until November 8th, 2020. You can read the DEIS, view public hearings, learn more about the project, and submit your comments at <https://495-270-p3.com>

If the beltway is widened, impacts to our region will include: loss of homes mostly in neighboring North Hills of Sligo; diminishment or loss of the Silver Spring YMCA; placement of one of only two toll road access points in Montgomery County on Colesville Rd., increasing its already high volume of traffic.



If you feel strongly about any of these, or other, issues, and would like to head or participate in a new SOECA committee, please contact the Board at soeca.board@gmail.com



Thanks to Councilmember Tom Hucker for the safety improvements at the traffic circle where Colesville meets 16th.

Every Friday night, starting at 7 pm, rain or shine - unless thunderstorm - neighborhood families are invited to meet at the intersection of Wayne and Dale to show their solidarity with the BLM movement and the fight for racial justice.



This is a low-key, grassroots, family-friendly, social-distanced event which we hope to sustain for the weeks and months to come. Everyone is invited to join, just once or every week as they see fit. It's just one way to show our neighbors that we care about racial justice and that change starts right here in our neighborhood.



JOIN SOECA

Annual membership renewal begins in October!

SOECA Membership: Pay by Check or Paypal
Annual dues of \$20 per household or \$10 for seniors and single members

- **PayPal:** from the “About” drop-down menu at www.soeca.org, select “Join SOECA” and follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.
- **Check:** make it payable to SOECA and send it with this form to: David Hartmann, SOECA Treasurer, 407 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or just drop it in his mailbox!

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Resident email addresses, home addresses, and other information are not shared.