



November 2020 Issue

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 17th, from 7-9pm on 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.

This means it couldn't be easier to join! We would love to see new faces join us. **Even if you are busy, you can still call in and listen** to stay up-



to-date on what is happening here in our neighborhood. We hope you can join us to help support and make a difference. A link and dial-in information will be sent out via email listserv in the days preceding the meeting.

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



With the holidays upon us in this crazy, crazy year, we pause to give thanks for all of our neighbors, thanks for all the effort and commitment many give, and being a part of this great neighborhood.

Stay well and – as always – if you have anything you'd like for SEOCA to take on, please let us know.

— Your SOECA Board

Make a Difference: There are two committees with openings to lead



them: the Silver Spring Library Development Committee and the Social Committee. If you are interested in leading either one of these, please email the board at soeca.board@gmail.com.

Fall Gardening Tip: Many gardeners are now in fact urging people not to overdo the autumn clean up. The thinking is that it's better for nature if decaying plants are left intact. They create a protective space for garden mammals and insects. Hollowed stems and seed heads also provide a safe haven for insects from frost.



SOECA Officers

Chris Reynolds President
Tom Armstrong, Vice President
David Hartmann, Treasurer
Claire Zietz, Secretary

Highlights for November Meeting

1. Report on DTSS Planning and Zoning Updates

2. Speakers: TBD*

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

In This Newsletter

1. SOECA 2020-21 Meeting Dates
2. Message from the Board
3. Committee Openings
4. Gardening Tip
5. October Meeting Minutes
6. Our Environment
7. Purple Line Update
8. Transportation Updates
9. Membership Signup
10. DTSS Zoning Changes – Act Now

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

Butterfly Garden – Betsy Mendelsohn
Bus Rapid Transit CAT – Brian Feit
Downtown Plan Committee – Chris Reynolds
Environment – Anne Vorce
Mosquito Abatement Project – Karen Kuehl 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
Silver Spring Library Redevelopment – **Open**
Social Committee– **Open**
Technology Committee – Jonathan Bernstein
Traffic Committee – Jean Cavanaugh

SUMMARY OF MINUTES FROM OCT. 7th, 2020 MEETING

Note: In an effort to save space in this newsletter, a summary only will be provided here. Full meeting minutes are now sent out after every meeting to the neighborhood listserv and also posted to our website at www.soeca.org/category/membership-meetings/

Treasurer's Report: Balance in the checking account is \$10,869.71. To note: October's membership renewal initiative is proceeding well with many dues being paid via online platforms.

TOPIC: Martha B. Gudelsky Child Development Center for the Old Silver Spring Library Property and Letter

After the meeting this past Spring, this plan then went in front of the Planning Board to get approval, which was granted. The next step is for the plan to go in front of the Montgomery County Examiner for a conditional use permit.

A letter was sent to Director Hannan, Hearing Examiner, to request traffic calming measures for Ellsworth Drive, which was sent with signatures from local residents. Chelsea Heights would like to be actively included in these conversations moving forward.

TOPIC: New Committee Formation

The Montgomery County Planning Department has a plan for the Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Master Plan, to account for the walkshed around the Purple Line and "missing middle housing". As this impacts a large part of SOECA members, a new committee was formed: the Downtown Plan Committee. Seven members volunteered to be a part of this committee with Chris Reynolds as the head.

TOPIC: SOECA 2020-2021 BOARD ELECTIONS

The nominees for the Board were presented: President: Chris Reynolds, Vice President: Tom Armstrong, a vacancy for the second VP Chair, Secretary: Claire Zietz, Treasurer: David Hartmann.

Slate of candidates was approved by unanimous vote.

OUR ENVIRONMENT: Summer into Fall

The wonderful summer gardens have become colorful fall gardens and the leaves are turning lovely shades of mainly yellow and orange but some red - and they are falling. Yes, fall is here. Hot cider, apple pie, hot soup. Logs on the fire or fire pit. Fabulous Halloween decorations on every block.



If you walked down Bennington Drive to the park recently, maybe you noticed some new greenery. What you saw was recent work by the County's Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to stabilize and plant the riparian buffer of the Bennington Tributary.* The creek buffer had been caving in from parking and heavy storm water runoff coming from DTSS and the neighborhood.

Parked cars there, the drainage system crossing the creek and even the road were at risk because the erosion had gotten so bad. To prevent even more serious problems, MCDOT stabilized the riparian buffer with willow sticks (remember the sticks that looked dead a year ago?) and gravel. The work conditions were tough (icy and very cold and wet) when the work was done.

Phase 2 was recently completed, as the natural riparian buffer was restored with a number of trees and shrubs. Among the plantings were 4 Pawpaw trees. Having healthy nature (including more tree canopy) in the watershed (and especially along the creek itself) is important to improve Sligo Creek's water quality.

(*Note: The Bennington Tributary drains Downtown Silver Spring and nearby areas. The total drainage area is

over 500 acres. It is also a constantly running stream, the buried old Ellsworth Creek. It daylight next to Bennington Dr before flowing into Sligo Creek near one of our benches and the tennis courts. The duck families and fish often gather at the mouth of the tributary.)

Thanks to Kathleen Samiy, Nancy Gehman, Charles Wolff, Terry Anderson, Kit Gage, and Elaine Lamirande and MCDOT who worked closely with Parks and DEP to restore the creek buffer. Thanks to MCDOT's Dan Sheridan, Matt Spielman and Kyle Hanley; Matt Harper and Doug Stephens of Parks; Doug Marshall and Miranda Reid of DEP; and the crew that worked in rough weather to do this.

About those fallen leaves, Friends of Sligo Creek is encouraging people to "Leave the Leaves". (Don't miss Kathy Michel's "Leave the Leaves" video on the new Friends of Sligo Creek's YouTube Channel!). Also as part of your fall clean-up, DEP urges people to let the water in their pool or hot tub sit for several days before draining. (Chlorine kills aquatic life in the creek.)

Thanks to Christopher Faunce of MCDOT for dispatching a crew to take out the metal hazard for anyone walking on Colesville near Woodside Parkway after a neighbor had it reported.



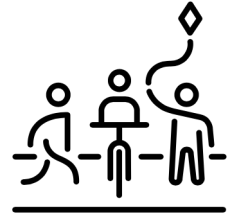
Purple Line Update. The Maryland Department of Transportation Transit Administration has taken over direct management of many subcontractors to the former Purple Line

Transit Construction (PLTC) group. According to the MTA management team, they will focus first of all on safety along the route, then on finishing utility relocation work, building retaining walls, and getting the 16 mile route ready for a new contractor partner. MTA is still in negotiation with PLTC about a disagreement over cost overruns. MTA is hoping to continue the P3 relationship with Purple Line Transit Partners, the entity that borrowed money through various federal government loans and bonds on behalf of the state of Maryland. MTA and the Governor will work out the way forward within the next six months and are committed to finishing the Purple Line project. You can direct comments and questions to outreach@purplelinemd.com. <https://www.purplelinemd.com/contact/contact-us>.

There is an upcoming Community Advisory Team Meeting on 11/17. See www.purplelinemd.com for more information.

Flash BRT. Montgomery County launched the Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service last month. Level boarding makes it easy for those in wheelchairs, using strollers or bringing bikes on board. The closest station to SOECA is near Fenton St. on Colesville Rd. Buses run every 7.5 minutes during rush hour and every 15 minutes other times. Flash is free now, but SmartCards will be accepted in the future. For more information, see <https://www.ridetheflash.com/us29/>.

Shared Streets. Remember, Montgomery County's Department of Transportation supports creating temporary "greenways" and shared streets upon request. Several streets in the neighborhoods around downtown Silver Spring have taken advantage of this initiative. Neighbors can apply for a permit from the county to close a street to through traffic for a period of time 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 8, 2020. The County Council, County Executive, many representing our county in the Maryland Legislature, and the bi-county Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission have all expressed opposition to many elements in the DEIS. 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.

JOIN SOECA



SOECA Membership: Pay by Check or Paypal or Zelle

Annual dues of \$20 per household or \$10 for seniors and single members

- **Online:** from the “About” drop-down menu at www.soeca.org, select “Join SOECA” and follow the instructions at the bottom of the page for Paypal. Or, pay with Zelle.
- **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 off in his mailbox!

Name: _____ Today’s Date: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Resident email addresses and home addresses are not shared.

NEW DOWNTOWN PLAN INCLUDES PARTS OF SOECA



The area to the left of the black line is included in the Downtown Silver Spring and Adjacent Communities plan area, and was chosen because it is within about a 10-minute walk of the Purple Line stops at the Transit Center and Library. The map can be found online:

montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Silver-Spring-Boundary-map.pdf

NEW DOWNTOWN PLAN INCLUDES SOECA

The Montgomery County Planning Board is now in the process of developing its new Silver Spring Downtown and Adjacent Communities Plan, and some parts of SOECA are included in the planning area. Check the **large map on the previous page** to see whether your home is within the study boundary.

The process may lead to zoning changes in the study area. The Planning Board will consider allowing increased density, including adding “missing middle” housing types such as duplexes, four-plexes, or low-rise apartment buildings. The plan also contemplates changes to downtown Silver Spring.

This process potentially impacts all of SOECA. Even if your home is not within the planning area, the new plan will impact the neighborhood we love and set a precedent for future changes.

Early public input has the greatest chance to influence the result, so now is the best time to submit comments to the Planning Board. After the plan has been drafted, advocacy tends to have little impact. There are several ways to keep up to date on the process and to express your opinions:

During the “listening phase” (until December 31), enter your comments and express your vision for our neighborhood via the Planning Board survey at surveymonkeys.com/r/sslistening

For further information, visit the Downtown Plan website:

montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/downcounty/silver-spring/silver-spring-downtown-plan

If you would like to join the SOECA Downtown Plan Committee, contact Kristen Conte at kcl.conte@gmail.com