

College Gardens Civic Association

Fall Meeting

November 10, 2010

Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Treasurer's Report: Don Mann reported that as of our spring meeting, we had \$12,181 in the bank. We spent \$1,095 on National Night Out and \$51 to rent the meeting room at College Gardens Elementary School, leaving a balance of \$11,042.

Announcements:

Gold Award Projects: Two College Gardens residents are working on their Girl Scout Gold Award Project. Meghan Washington is going to survey the flora at the College Gardens Park and make a census of how many of the 1,600 plants survived their first year. She will also make a map of the plantings and share it with the neighborhood. Edina Pasic is helping Upscale Resale Thrift Shop in College Plaza, a non-profit group that employs mentally impaired people. She asks neighbors to make donations to the store (they will pick up if you call) and to volunteer there as well. The phone for Upscale Resale Thrift is 301-738-7723.

Dogs: Following a dog fight in the neighborhood last week, CGCA President Tom Miner asked that residents remember to obey local laws regarding dogs—keep them on leashes and pick up after them.

City Master Plan Update: Jerry Callistein proposed that residents come together to define our vision for our neighborhood and the city and submit it as part of the city's master plan update. Issues of particular interest to CG include the future of College Plaza and the relationship with Montgomery College. Anyone interested in participating, please contact Jerry at Jerry@Callistein.com.

Peerless Rockville Award: Paul O'Brien said the historic preservation group Peerless Rockville presented the City of Rockville with an award recognizing how well the city and the community worked together to renovate College Gardens Park. Paul praised the involvement of CG residents, Jim Carleton, Mike Phillips, Ted Reuther, Mark Pierzchala, Charlie Burroughs, Jerry Leighton, and the group of parents who chose the playground equipment.

National Night Out: National Night Out chair Susan Van Grack thanked former chair Shari Perry for her guidance this year, Don Mann and Ken Cohen for their expert grilling, Tom Miner for bringing the music and everyone who came to the August 2 event and had a great time. She hopes people will share new ideas and volunteer to help make next year's NNO even better.

Solar Panels: Yale Place resident Heath Marell explained his family's recent decision to install solar panels on their roof. Any roof that gets 4-5 hours per day of full sun is a good candidate, he said. He expects to recoup his initial outlay of \$15,000 in 2 ½ years thanks to \$12,000 in county, state and federal tax credits, an annual savings of \$350 on his electricity costs, and an annual income of \$850 for selling solar energy credits to companies that buy them. The Marells chose a system in which their panels generate power that is sold back to the grid and they then buy power from the grid. He also recommended a home energy audit, shopping for power companies that offer low rates, and exploring Pepco's Energy Wise Rewards program as additional ways to save money on electricity and help the environment. (For more information, see the Solar Panels attachment that Heath prepared.)

Portables at College Gardens Elementary School: Andrea Hall explained that CGES was built to hold 690 students and is close to 800 now, with projections for 835 next year. Montgomery County Public Schools has placed two portable classrooms at College Gardens that will soon be occupied, and MCPS will not add onto the building because it is already at maximum physical size for an elementary school. As part of its FY 2012 Capital Improvements Program, MCPS plans to study whether to open a new elementary school on West Edmonston Drive, at the site of the former Hungerford Park Elementary School. The new school would provide relief to the four Richard Montgomery cluster elementary schools—Beall, College Gardens, Ritchie Park and Twinbrook—all of which are above capacity. The 150 students in the Chinese Immersion Program at CGES would move to the new school. MCPS will also study whether to add on to Julius West Middle School, which is expected to be 300 students over capacity by 2016. For more information on CGES capacity, see two Gazette articles: http://www.gazette.net/stories/11032010/rocknew215600_32534.php and http://www.gazette.net/stories/11102010/bethnew214124_32556.php.

Rockville City Announcements: City Branding: Jenny Kimball, Assistant City Manager, pointed out that earlier in the year the City had undertaken a re-branding effort. There are now three new Rockville logos with tag lines available for public review. The City is asking for residents' input. The logos and the online comment form are available here: <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/branding>.

Rockville's Pike: The City is updating its plan for the portion of the Rockville Pike corridor that is within the City boundaries. [See map](#). The new plan will be available shortly. Residents can find out more information on the process and discover ways to get involved as well as provide The City with feedback. See <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockvillespike> for details.

#45 Ride-On Bus: Tom Miner reporter that he followed the civic association's direction at the spring meeting and asked the county department of transportation to consider adding a stop at Montgomery College and extending

the hours of the Route 45 bus. He received a letter saying the staff had reviewed the request but that funds are not available to expand any services at this time. (To read the full letter, see the Route 45 attachment.)

Montgomery College Pedestrian and Bike Path: Tom Miner reported that he attended the September 27 meeting of the Montgomery College Board of Trustees and presented a plan to reopen the fence that was developed by CG and Plymouth Woods residents, per the civic association’s direction at its spring meeting. Mark Pierzchala said the city also wrote a letter to MC, and he and a group of residents would meet November 13 to talk further. But he is not optimistic that the college will re-open the fence. Tom noted the concerns of Princeton Place residents when students smoked and lingered in their front yards. Several suggestions were raised, including a key card access system. But City of Rockville representative Jenny Kimball said key card entry raises questions about limiting access on a public sidewalk and managing the cards. Tom asked anyone with continuing concerns or suggestions to contact him at president@collegedgards.org.

Accessible Playground Equipment: Mark Pierzchala reminded residents that at the CGCA spring meeting, he asked for and the civic association agreed to approve a contribution toward the purchase of accessible playground equipment for CGES. The school’s PTA was also willing to help, and Mark had intended to ask the city to put surplus money toward the project. But the city spent much of the surplus to pay down the RedGate Golf Course debt, and other projects are already in line for remaining funds. So Mark said he won’t move on the request this year.

College Gardens Park Sign: Discussion of how best to use the sign board in the park was deferred to the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Goldgeier, Secretary

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