



East Silver Spring Citizens' Association, Inc.

January 2014

**Informal networking and dinner at our next
EAST SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ASSOCIATION (ESSCA) MEETING
MEETING DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2014**

JANUARY MEETING PLACE—PETE'S NEW HAVEN PIZZA

962 Wayne Avenue, Silver Spring MD - (301) 588-7383 - petesapizza.com

REGULAR MEETING DATE: Third Monday of month (Sept - May) Doors open 7:00 pm, Meeting starts 7:30 pm

JOIN ESSCA'S LIST-SERVE: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eastsilverspringcivic>

(Include your name and street name when you send your "join request")

WE WILL TRY SOMETHING FUN AND DIFFERENT FOR OUR JANUARY MEETING! Neighborhood Meet and Greet at Pete's New Haven Pizza! We will not have a formal agenda for this meeting. This will be a chance to meet some new neighbors, catch up with old ones and tell us what is on your mind. Why not make a night of it and bring your kids? *Pizza and drinks available for purchase.* We hope to see you there!

MONDAY JANUARY 20TH, 2014, 7:00 TO 9:00 PM - PETE'S PIZZA - 962 WAYNE AVENUE, SILVER SPRING

PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING ESSCA!

WE ARE YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION. Membership dues allow us to: Print this newsletter, beautify our neighborhood and our parks, work on other issues beneficial to the community, including working with local developers for better projects, parking permits and monitoring neighborhood crime.

WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP WE COULD IMPROVE ON THESE EFFORTS AND DO A LOT MORE. Annual ESSCA dues are \$10/family. Dues cover each meeting season, from September to May. Please pay at our next meeting, or send a check (payable to ESSCA) to Steve Knight, ESSCA Treasurer, 808 Violet Place, Silver Spring MD 20910. Thank you!

ESSCA'S NOVEMBER MEETING

We heard from Evan Glass, Silver Spring Citizen's Advisory Board President and member of the Montgomery County Nighttime Economy Task Force. Evan served on the Task Force and he gave us a presentation reviewing their findings which were recently given over to County Executive Ike Leggett in October of this past year for further consideration and possible implementation.

The Task Force was launched in 2013 by the County Executive as part of the New Montgomery Initiative, the vision of which is to make Montgomery County "innovation-driven, transit-friendly, connected, and multi-generational". The other three components besides the Nighttime Economy Task Force include "Montgomery County is Open for Business", Economic Strategy and work on Branding and Marketing. The following is largely taken from the slide presentation Evan gave us. It and further information can be found at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/nighttimeeconomy/>.

The reasons for the focus on nighttime economy are:

- Montgomery County is losing more young people and gaining seniors in comparison to our neighboring jurisdictions. Furthermore, Montgomery County has the smallest percentage of millennials in the Washington DC region.
- Young people want to be able to live, work, and play within walking distance.
- The same things that attract young people are attractive to empty-nesters and seniors, and everyone in between.
- Everyone participates in the nighttime economy in some way.
- The County's fiscal health cannot survive on a 9-5 economy alone – how can we create a vibrant 18-hour economy for all of our residents?

Broad Themes of the Task Force include:

- Montgomery County is already very strong – great schools, strong community, good daytime economy.
- Embrace our strengths, and improve on areas that could still use some work.
- Strong daytime economy (9 am-6 pm), but the nighttime economy (6 pm-12 am+) could be stronger and more vibrant.

**PRESIDENT: BOB COLVIN, VICE PRESIDENT: DARIAN UNGER, TREASURER: STEVE KNIGHT,
RECORDING SECRETARY: NANCY GURGANUS, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: MEGAN MORIARTY,
CHAIR FOR PLANNING, ZONING & PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: KAREN ROPER**

- All ages, cultures, socioeconomic statuses, and geographic areas of the County participate in the nighttime economy in some way. How do we improve it for all of them?
- Initial focus on five areas of the County: Bethesda, Silver Spring, Wheaton, Rockville and Germantown

Recommendations from the Task Force fall under six categories, as follows:

Arts & Entertainment: Build capacity with dedicated revenue stream for managing large scale, free and public initiatives; provide incentives to developers to provide affordable performance space for small and emerging arts organizations; develop a program for buskers to provide sidewalk entertainment in urban areas; relax some aspects of the county noise ordinance at established urban activity areas, such as Veteran’s Plaza, including an increase in the allowable noise level for qualifying activities to 85 decibels measured at 100’ from the center of a performance, increase the time limit for such activities until midnight and notify nearby residents about such activities prior to their occurrence.

Public Space & Amenities: Amend zoning standards to provide flexibility in meeting public and open space requirements; support additional density in the county’s urban areas; allow food trucks in designated areas; professionally manage and maintain public areas through public-private partnerships, such as the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

Quality of Life: Encourage more housing options and increase funding for urban districts and business improvement districts.

Transportation: Improve awareness of parking areas through such things as better signage and wayfinding; increase the number of taxi stands; increase the quantity and frequency of circulator (Van Go) type bus service; expand the frequency and reach of late night transit service; enhance pedestrian and bicycle access; improve safe ride programs to address concerns about possible increases in drunk driving.

Venue Operations & Public Safety: Several needed improvements to the County’s Department of Liquor Control (DLC) were cited, including improving their inventory management and increasing their level of responsiveness to requests for new items; having the County do a comprehensive study of DLC (which may include whether or not it is still needed); extend hours of operation at bars and restaurants to 2AM on Sundays through Thursdays and 3AM on Fridays and Saturdays; create a social venue license, which would allow businesses to increase the allowable sales ratio of alcohol to food from the current 50/50 to 60/40; support dedicated public safety resources in high density urban areas.

Business Engagement: Simplify the process that arts and entertainment venues must go through to open a business; provide guidance to prospective small business owners to shepherd them through the (complex) process of opening an arts and entertainment venue and facilitate working relationships with the multiple departments providing r oversight and control; create a marketing program for the county.

Comments by Meeting Attendees:

There was some debate about whether or not there is sufficient parking in the CBD, but all agreed awareness of it in certain areas can be greatly improved; One participant mentioned concerns about the lack of police to assist in creating a greater sense of safety, saying we have one of the lowest ratios of police to residents in the region; many spoke of the short-sightedness of the county’s planning efforts to push multi-family housing in the CBD and not balancing this with work places, which would essentially create a high density bedroom community, not conducive to creating a vibrant nighttime economy; finally, some mentioned a concern about the county’s lack of effort in addressing nighttime-related community nuisances, such as Gill’s on Piney Branch Avenue, the site of several recent crime incidents.

Finally, if you have related comments to share with the county, you may email them to Ike Leggett’s office: ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov

BLAIR HOUSE UPDATE

We had a presentation by Joey Lampl about this same time last year on historic resources in the County’s park system, including the historic house in Jesup Blair Park. We checked in recently with the Parks Department for an update and learned there has been some progress on addressing the deterioration and neglect of the last standing home of Silver Spring’s founding family. To start, an architect hired to do an assessment of the structure has completed their study. The Housing Opportunities Commission and Parks, the two departments involved, are currently developing a work plan to complete renovations in two stages. Stage 1 will include removal of hazardous material, stabilization and repair to the exterior and structure and gutting of the interior. There will then be a waiting period to ensure there are no additional leaks and to let the building breathe. Stage 2 will encompass interior renovation and restoration. As we learn more about future plans for the Jesup Blair house we will share them with you.

SILVER SPRING VILLAGE

At our last meeting we heard from Martine Brizius about Silver Spring Village, a non-profit organization that is part of a growing trend of organized areas that help older people age in place and remain in their homes by providing assistance with transportation needs, by offering concierge and other similar services and by providing referrals for services and by organizing social activities. The Village was formally launched in September 2013. If you are interested in volunteering, becoming a member or just learning more, please visit their website at www.silverspringvillage.org or contact them at 301-503-7401.

BEST OF FENTON VILLAGE II

Voting for your favorite establishments in Fenton Village closed on December 31st. We will report winners in all categories next month. If you did not get a chance to vote, then do one better by getting out and supporting your favorite small, local, independent businesses in the New Year!

ANOTHER LITTLE FREE LIBRARY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

As we reported in our last newsletter a Little Free Library sponsored by Karen and Jeff Kenton has opened at 714 Chesapeake Avenue. It has been joined by another at 809 Islington St. and is sponsored by Janice and Allen Browne. Thank you all for promoting literacy and the love of reading through these free book exchanges. You can learn more about the Little Free Library Story at www.littlefreelibrary.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP DELIVER NEWSLETTER

We need a volunteer to deliver The Advocate on Queen Annes, McNeill and Deerfield. If you are interested in helping ESSCA and could spare about an hour once every 2 months to deliver the newsletter in this area, please contact Betsy Taylor at 301-589-4868.