

The Echo

The Town of GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered 1904



August 2014

Public Hearing Focus of July Council Meeting

By Julia Wilson

The Town Council held a public hearing on July 14 to take public input and vote on the Town's response to Aaron Hirsch's application to the Montgomery County Planning Board for a four-lot subdivision on the Vassar Circle property formerly owned by the Baptist Church and then the National Community Church. The final decision is the Board's to make since Glen Echo does not have zoning authority under our charter. Prior to our input, a formal public hearing is required by the Town according to Mayor Debbie Beers.

However, the initial application was filed before the Town recently passed an ordinance requiring up to a 50-foot right-of-way when an area is being re-

What's Inside

Vassar Circle Development.....	1
New Town Clerk.....	4
Town Picnic Photos.....	7, 10

subdivided and the property covers the entire block. Hirsch met informally with Town officials to begin negotiations on accommodating residents' concerns but that meeting was held just a few days before the public hearing so any suggestions are not incorporated into the current plan. Hirsch says he is still

CONTINUED on page 3

THE ECHO

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Letters to the Editor are welcome. They must be signed. Articles for publication are also solicited. Please send comments about *The Echo* to the Editor, the Mayor, or any Council member. Volunteer reporters are always needed.

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Next — Council Meeting
August 11, 2014, at 8 pm

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CONTINUED from page 1

planning for additional meetings with the Town to resolve the widening of the road. As a consequence, he said, the public hearing is premature.

Hirsch stated that the county code calls for new development to be in character of the area with existing lots. He also said that his analysis shows his proposal meets that criteria. He also believes his proposed development meets the subjective criteria the Planning Board will consider: alignment, shape, and suitability for use.

Hirsch said he and his group have just begun addressing the issues raised by the Town Council and residents during the passage of the ordinance and he has not yet proposed any additional allotment of land for widening. His original application proposed minor changes to widen the road.

A number of residents stood up to speak about the issue.

“We are stewards of this Town,” Raya Bodnar-chuk said, “and this project should be treated as a great design project and should not be rushed.”

Phyllis Fordham said she was neutral at this time, saying, “It is important to see the final plan.”

Renny Springuel said he recommends that the Town take into consideration safety for fire trucks, snowplows, and garbage trucks as well as additional parking and traffic.

John Niles said that there are legal precedents for blocking the plans, completely intimating that this would be his preference.

Peter Zeidenberg said he supported the development saying the plan is modest, creative, and fits in to the neighborhood.

Gloria Levin stressed that the Town needs to retain as much of its prerogatives as possible when dealing with the Planning Board.

Mayor Debbie Beers also noted that the fire department can ban parking on the street if there is not 20 feet of paved area and 8 feet of parking. She said, “We adopted the new road code to establish adequate space where we can. We want to keep the existing parking and add additional parking.”

After residents’ comments, Hirsch’s attorney, Erin Girard, said, “We have made revisions already; we

are responsive. The big issue is road safety and we will be working on that.” However, she added, the new ordinance calls for 5,500 square feet of dedicated area for the roadway, which is almost a whole buildable lot. “That is a very big expense,” she said. “There needs to be a reasonable nexus between the requirements of the new ordinance on the impact of new development.”

She said she was happy to see there were not a lot of adverse comments from residents on the size and shape of the lots.

The Council conferred briefly after the open comment portion of the meeting. Town attorney Norman Knopf told the council they had three options. They can a) recommend that the Planning Board approve the proposal, b) recommend that the Board approve the proposal with amendments, or c) recommend that the Planning Board reject the proposal.

Councilmember Steve Matney made a motion recommending the Planning Board deny the application, with the understanding that the plan can be altered. “We are not opposed to revising the recommendation if the application is amended,” he said. The motion passed unanimously. Councilmember Matt Stiglitz was not in attendance.

According to Stiglitz, who spoke to *The Echo* after the meeting, because of the Town’s vote, the Planning Board could conceivably still vote to approve the plan, but would now need four out of five commissioners to approve the plan instead of the usual three out of five.

CONTINUED on Page 4

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CONTINUED from Page 3

Parking for The Irish Inn

Dick Leggin, owner of 6110 Oberlin, came to the Town Council meeting to express concerns about the extension of the parking license for use of the Town lot by the Irish Inn. The license is for use of 15 overflow days of the year, which will be named in the license, such as St. Patrick’s Day.

Leggin is a neighbor of the lot and he said he had not been given details of the agreement. He maintains there should be a hearing and public discussion on the issue.

Mayor Beers said the benefit of the parking arrangement is to get cars off the street on those busy days.

The owners of the Irish Inn have agreed to provide landscaping to shield the neighbors from the parking lot.

Town Clerk Sworn In

The new Clerk–Treasurer Stacey Malmgren was sworn in to office. She will replace Nicole Fraser when Nicole leaves her job in August to move overseas. Stacy’s office hours at Town Hall will be 5 pm to 7 pm on Monday and Wednesday evenings.



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Ladies Night

on Tuesday,

August 19, at 8 pm

at the home of

Martha Shannon

26 Wellesley Circle

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LOCAL EVENTS

C&O Canal Activities

Nature Walk to View Dragonflies

Saturday, August 9, at 10 am
Pennyfield Lock

Contact levelwalker@candocanal.org for details.



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O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

■ SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Holy Eucharist	8:00 a.m.
Bible Study	9:15 a.m.
Nursery Care	10:15 a.m.
Holy Eucharist	10:30 a.m.
Church School for All Ages	10:30 a.m.

■ UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Mondays, August 4 – September 1, 7:00 p.m.
Labyrinth Walk with Contemplative Music

Sunday, September 7, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.
Homecoming Sunday Worship (Ice Cream Social at 12 noon)

Monday, October 6, 7:30 p.m.
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Town Major Expenditure Update

During the month of June, the Town paid \$15,041 to Knopf and Brown and \$25,837 to Peyton’s Tree Service. The latter payment was for 2013 and 2014 to date and was higher than usual because of winter road conditions.

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GLEN ECHO TOWN HALL EVENTS

These events are free to Town residents.

FSGW English Country Dance
every Wednesday, 8–10:30 pm

C&O Canal Association Board
Sunday, August 3, 1 pm

Police Crime Report

Matt Stiglitz, the Town liaison with the Montgomery County Police Department, corresponded with Town residents via the Yahoo group listserv for Town residents. In a recent report, police stressed that almost 80% of car break-ins that occurred in our district were in unlocked cars. Other cars that may have been locked were forcibly entered when valuables could be seen through the windows.



- Cat care
 - Midday dog walks
 - Overnight housesitting
- 301-229-4774
petsbypatricia@gmail.com
www.petsittingbypatricia.com

Summer Concert Series

Thursdays, June 18–August 28 at 7:30 pm
Bumper Car Pavilion
See www.glenechopark.org
or call 301-634-2222

Ode to Glen Echo

Thanks to you, National Community Church, I can see what Glen Echo will become. The space for the Chautauqua’s Woman’s Temple, then a community space, then fire house, then Baptist Church has now flowered into the ultimate utilization, a subdivision of houses. Not monstrosities, but houses that barely remember the modest homes with yards from our past, a past that still exists in Glen Echo. Many people believe that the physical/practical is more important than a vision or an idea. Myself, I will mourn the passing of our communal space.

— Norman Hudson-Taylor

Town Picnic

The Town picnic was a huge success. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped with setup: Ben Malmgrem, Bram Wilson, Maddox Feldbaum, Nora Feldbaum, Raya Bodnarian, and Bill Roseberry. Thanks also to those who helped with cleanup: Brent Agnew, Patrick Hooper, Cathie Polak, Mallory Polak, Erin Polak, Mallory Polak, Steve Matney, Diana Hudson-Taylor, Dirk Anderson, as well as others who pitched in.

Thanks also to Patty Siebert for the photos shown below, and to Jane Stevenson and Susan Grigsby for creating the Gas Cake extravaganza.



Our gas lines are celebrated with a custom-made cake.



Allie and Patrick Hooper with daughters Gabriella and Christina



Phyllis Fordham and Gloria Levin enjoy the picnic.



The water slide was a hit with children and adults.

See more photos on page 10.

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Trusted Helper: Holly Shimuzu would like neighbors to know that a woman who has worked for them is available to take on additional work. She can provide house sitting, pet sitting, house cleaning, baby sitting, French tutoring, and more. Email Noah5dns@gmail.com or call 240-421-3997. Holly is at 301-229-3011



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Police Report

Between June 9 and July 13, off-duty police issued 26 warnings and 7 citations for not stopping at the stop sign on Oxford Road. During camp drop-off on July 3 and July 11, the violations were so frequent that one officer had difficulty stopping all the cars. Next reporting period both officers will attempt to be present during these peak hours. The Town paid \$360 for these services.

AROUND TOWN

Peter Somerville's daughter **Annabel**, her husband **Christopher**, and eight fellow medics are participating in the Mongol Rally, in which they drive tiny inappropriate cars along back roads from London to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, all to raise money to buy life-saving equipment for Cairns Hospital Emergency Department and Royal Flying Doctor Service. They've raised \$36,000 Australian dollars so far. They will be driving 16,000 kilometres across 21 countries, 3 deserts, and 4 mountain ranges. Although they have no mechanical skills between the them, they've managed to stitch back together A & C's car, Matilda, which broke down once before they reached the starting line and then again in France.

If you'd like to track them across Europe and Asia on their adventure, go to www.fnqmedics.com and click on their blog and Facebook links. Their website gives the most background about their adventure and their blog and Facebook pages carry up-to-date information about their travels, as well as great photos of the exotic lands they are traveling through. Their screen names on those sites are AB and Oscar.

Debbie Lange designed their website and blog.



Matilda takes the lead at the starting line, with Warnie, Kylie, and Priscilla right behind.



The Aussie team, London helpers, and their newly painted, almost dry cars. Annabel and Christopher are to the right of the second car.

Glen Echo Park Activities

The Puppet Co.

Little Red Riding Hood & the 3 Little Pigs
July 24–August 31

Tiny Tots

Select Weds, Sats, and Suns at 10 am
See www.thepuppetco.org
or call 301-634-5380

Adventure Theatre MTC

Pinkalicious

June 20–August 31

See www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org
or call 301-634-2270

Summer Concert Series

Thursdays, June 18–August 28, 7:30 pm

Bumper Car Pavilion

See www.glenechopark.org
or call 301-634-2222

More Town Picnic Photos



Children line up to use the water slide.



Emily Siegel and Jocie Khalifa



Jane Stevenson in her picnic hat



Nicole Fraser enjoys the slide with the children.