

**TOWN OF GLEN ECHO**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
JUNE 13, 2011

ATTENDANCE: Debbie Beers, Mayor  
Eve Arber, Councilmember  
Nancy Long, Councilmember  
Steve Matney, Councilmember  
Mark McCaffrey, Councilmember

VISITORS: Steve Atkinson, engineer, PEPCO  
Charles Washington, government affairs, PEPCO  
Bob Hainey, manager of media relations, PEPCO  
Polly Angelakis, Site Manager, Glen Echo Park (GEP), NPS  
Eleanor Balaban, resident  
Diana Hudson-Taylor, resident  
Matt Stiglitz, resident  
Julia Wilson, reporter, The Echo

**GLEN ECHO PARK (GEP) REPORT**

Ms. Angelakis reported the following:

- The new visitor information signs for Clara Barton National Historic Site (NHS) and for Glen Echo Park have been installed.
- Trolley restoration discussions continue with preservation experts and the park superintendent about what processes can be completed onsite.
- Washington Folk Festival was a great success. Use of enlarged historic photos at the NPS information booth led to numerous new contacts for the NPS oral history project.
- A memorial service for civil rights protestor Joe Flynn was held last Thursday in the Bumper Car Pavilion. Dr. Flynn is the protestor highlighted in Site Manager's letter in upcoming Fall/Winter catalogue.
- Phyllis Plater ("Sharna") is the new Facility Operations Manager for Clara Barton NHS and Glen Echo Park.
- Two students have begun full time summer work for NPS. One, Zack Gardner, led development of the current Oral History Project. The other, Samantha Christine, was one of the spring semester Oral History interns.
- The Civil Rights Exhibit is being redone and will be on display in the GEPPAC office within the next week.

Councilmember Long asked if there were plans to place more bike racks in the park. People are arriving from MacArthur Boulevard and do not know where to place bikes. Ms. Angelakis replied that more bike racks will be placed when the shared use path is complete. Ms. Long asked about plans once suggested by NPS for a picnic area at the undeveloped space near Tulane Avenue (the former mini-golf course). Ms. Angelakis indicated those plans are still being considered.

Councilmember Matney asked if there was any way to alert town residents about traffic issues involving the Clara Barton Parkway. He stated that the Parkway was closed for tree-trimming for 4-6 hours with no notice given. It would be helpful if the community was informed. Mr. Matney asked if it would be possible to have an electronic sign situated before entering the parkway, in the event of future closures.

Mayor Beers said that more trees have fallen in the canal between Locks 7 and 8 and asked if there was any plan to clear that area using volunteers. Ms. Angelakis offered to pass along the information to Kevin Brandt, superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Ms. Long offered that Mayor Beers could e-mail the canal headquarters in Hagerstown. Councilmember Matney also said that the towpath had been destroyed by a service truck near the WSSC intake at Brookmont. Heavy pickup truck ruts destroyed the towpath. Ms. Angelakis said that she would pass this on too.

Diana Hudson-Taylor said that on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> an event at the bumper car pavilion was far too loud and could be heard all the way to the Glen Echo Baptist Church. Ms. Angelakis offered to pass this on to GEPPAC.

### **PEPCO**

Mayor Beers outlined the town's concerns about the reliability of service. Recently power outages have occurred for a few hours when there have not been storm-related events. With only 78 houses on one loop, Glen Echo is consistently the last of the queue to have service returned. Bare electrical wires in town are not insulated, and two fires have occurred when the wires have fallen on trees.

Mr. Washington reported that he looked at the service history for Glen Echo and he recognizes that the town has not received reliable service. Most of the outages were storm-related however the latest outage on June 7<sup>th</sup> was caused by vines down on Goldsboro Road. He outlined Pepco's reliability enhancement plan:

- Tree trimming (to be done in the beginning of July);
- Distribution automation, smart grid, smart relay and smart meters. Rerouting of service based on more accurate information (to be done by December 31st);
- Install underground lines (not applicable to Glen Echo);
- Feeder line improvement (from substation in Woodacres)

Mr. Washington said that Pepco is also restructuring its response after storms from order-based dispatching to area-based process: crews fix the largest outage first and then move to the next community geographically not necessarily the next biggest outage.

Councilmember Matney asked when this process would be in place. Mr. Washington said it would be in place July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councilmember Long noted that one of the most recent problems was in Washington in underground wiring, a problem therefore not caused by trees. Mr. Washington said that trees are the most visible thing that Pepco can do to enhance reliability; unseen is underground cable replacement (518,000 feet of cable has been replaced).

Mr. Atkinson reported that looking back at Glen Echo's outage history, most outages were caused by trees and animals. Tree trimming will be completed in July and primary and secondary wire will be "heavied up" to minimize tree impact if a tree does fall on a wire. New primary and secondary lines, of 4.1 and 4.5 miles respectively are to be replaced by September 1<sup>st</sup>; the process is currently in the permitting stage. Mr. Atkinson asserted that with distribution automation, the frequency of outages may not decrease but the outage duration should significantly shorter. Councilmember Matney pointed out that Glen Echo is a dangling node on the electrical plan. He asked if there were any plans to put in another link to reroute the town, so the distribution automation plan might be more effective for Glen Echo. Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Matney discussed the what such a plan might entail. Mr. Atkinson offered to return to the July 11<sup>th</sup> council meeting with his results.

Ms. Balaban said that during the June 7<sup>th</sup> outage, she was frustrated with the inaccuracy of the automated response about restoration of service. Mr. Washington conceded that estimated restoration times (particularly automated ones and early ones) are an imperfect science. Mr. Washington said that with the installation of smart meters that there might be an improvement of estimated restoration times as outage information would be reported by the meter rather than by the resident. The installation of smart meters will occur in the next months. Letters will be sent ten days ahead of time, and a Pepco representative will knock on the door before the meter is changed. A small disruption of power (about 5 minutes) will occur and a door hanger will be left if the resident is not home.

Ms. Hudson-Taylor asked if the kilowatchers program (now called energy wise rewards) which allows residents to cycle off during peak times would be effected by the smart meters. Mr. Washington did not think so.

Councilmember Arber asked if the smart meters would affect the estimated billing. Mr. Washington said that estimated billing would be a thing of the past.

Mayor Beers asked if Pepco can force a property owner to cut a tree if it is touching a line. Mr. Washington said that legally Pepco has no ability to force a property owner to cut the tree. He hopes for a very big meeting at the county level to propose a concept to allow Pepco to appeal under county government nuisance laws when the danger has been assessed by a county forester. Mayor Beers expressed support. Mr. Washington said Pepco would appreciate a letter of support from the town when the issue comes up. Ms. Hudson-Taylor asked when this issue was brought before the county council. Mr. Washington said it was brought up two weeks ago but county council has not reconvened since the budget passed.

Mayor Beers asked about the process for streetlight maintenance. Mr. Washington said it is best to do it online, but to send him by e-mail any requests for now as the online reporting system is being worked on.

Councilmember Matney said that he is concerned about the integrity of the secondary lines. Mr. Atkinson said that Pepco has a separate plan for that. Ms. Hudson-Taylor asked why are dead lines not removed. Mr. Atkinson said they can not take dead lines out if they are bundled with other wires. Ms. Hudson-Taylor asked where should one report a damaged line. Mr. Atkinson offered that she could call the outage line or e-mail him. Mr. Washington said that Pepco needs to make sure that it is their line and not a communication line. Mr. Atkinson noted that secondary lines are covered (not insulated) for tree contact.

Councilmember Long asked with the new smart meters, grid and relays if there was any way to control surges or drops in power so that there is no need for surge protectors. Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Washington both said emphatically no. Mr. Washington said "I don't think there would be a situation where we would not recommend a surge protector."

#### **GEPPAC**

Mayor Beers asked to be reappointed to the GEPPAC board, to represent the Town.

**Motion 2011-14** to reappoint Mayor Beers to the GEPPAC board. Motion approved unanimously.

Mayor Beers left the meeting and handed over the meeting to Councilmember Long.

#### **TOWN PICNIC**

The town council chose to hold the town picnic on July 16<sup>th</sup>, catered by California Tortilla. Town residents are asked to bring dessert, beer or wine.

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSURANCE TRUST (LGIT)**

Clerk-Treasurer Fraser brought up the LGIT liability agreement. The council asked if the police were covered by the county or the town and liability for users of the town hall. Both are currently at zero. Clerk-Treasurer Fraser offered to look into these questions.

#### **BUDGET**

Clerk-Treasurer asked to have \$2000 moved from contingency to administration to cover the costs for the traffic management of Oxford Road. Councilmember Matney suggested moving over \$2500.

**Motion 2011-15** to move \$2500 from contingency to administration. Motion approved unanimously.

#### **TOWN HALL ELEVATOR**

Councilmember Long reported that the elevator service repairman recommended that the elevator have a surge protector; as power surges (and drops) are the probable cause of the problems with the elevator, which appear to be in the computer system. Each of the two elevator doors has a motor; the motor on the ground floor is not working properly. This repairman recommended we contact an electrician who works with commercial elevators;

Town Council Minutes

June 13, 2011

Page 5 of 5

his repair crew does not include an electrician. The repairman says that the town does not need a new elevator. Clerk-Treasurer Fraser has called Case to send a commercial electrician out to see about installing a surge protector.

The council offered to pass a motion pending e-mail approval for any elevator repairs not to exceed \$5,000.

**Motion 2011-16** to approve via e-mail any elevator repairs not to exceed \$5,000. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Long closed the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Nicole Fraser

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Deborah Beers, Mayor

Date