The February 8 virtual Council meeting was a small affair with just the Council, Mayor Polak, Town Manager Beth Boa, lawyer Ron Bolt, and one Echo reporter in attendance.

**Building Permit Protocols**

The Council came prepared to take action on Resolution 20-07 and Ordinance 21-01, which they did after a short discussion. As outlined at the previous two Council meetings, the resolution and ordinance would allow the Mayor to attach a set of standard construction site protocols to any building permits issued and give the Mayor the authority to issue stop-work orders if the permit conditions are not followed.

Having reviewed the permit conditions for the remaining houses to be built in Vassar Circle, Council Member Spealman questioned why there were a few conditions there that hadn’t been included in the standard protocols. Namely, a pre-excavation site meeting with builders and Town representatives is required, and the Town must be notified prior to the County’s final building inspection, so Town reps can attend as well. After discussion, the Council decided to include those in the standard protocols since the Town Manager and Mayor can eliminate any conditions that aren’t applicable to a specific project—i.e. you won’t need a site visit before building a new fence. It was noted that further permit conditions may arise after a pre-construction site visit, but those would be non-standard and would require sign off from the Council.

The Council discussed a letter sent by former Mayor Debbie Beers in which she argued that new curb cuts for parking shouldn’t require a variance. While the Council agreed that in some cases it would make sense to allow for a new curb cut, like on the side of the street where there is no parking, that actually putting in a new driveway for parking isn’t a one-to-one trade for street parking. For one, it’s private and thus not available for public parking, and the required width of the cuts plus requirements for cars to park a certain distance from the driveway mean three spots could be lost on the street to gain one on a property. The Council decided the variance process makes sense so requests can be handled case-by-case. Both the resolution and the ordinance passed unanimously.

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**Charitable Giving**

Council Member Costello wants to create a Town protocol for donations. Historically, the Town doesn’t give much or to many organizations, and this is similar to how other small towns do it. Glen Echo gives consistently only to the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, which runs the programs at Glen Echo Park. All of the Council Members and Mayor agree that the Partnership (also known as GEPPAC) has a special status being within the Town’s limits and clearly benefits Town residents generally. We typically give...
Beyond that, the Town mostly doesn’t give to local causes—a recent exception being Glen Echo Fire Department. And for the most part, the Council didn’t seem too eager to expand the Town’s giving. Council Member Stiglitz is against the Town making charitable donations, and Council Member Wilson agreed that it would open the Council up to more work and difficult decisions if residents came regularly to ask for donations to causes. Mr. Spealman said that just weighing the very small number of requests as they come has worked fine in the past, and Mayor Polak suggested that the policy could simply be that the Town only gives to the Partnership. Ms. Costello disagreed and

We finally got some snow last month, which means higher snow removal costs!
pushed for budgeting for more charitable giving that residents or organizations could apply for. Mr. Stiglitz pointed out that this should be part of the budget discussion and that Ms. Costello could make her proposal to the Council that is in place at that time—Mr. Stiglitz’s, Mr. Spealman’s, and Mr. Polak’s seats will be on the ballot in May. That said, the 2021–2022 budget will be approved at the first Council meeting after the election.

Odds and Ends
The snow removal funds in the budget are being spent this year. The snow that came January 30–February 2 cost us $9,000 in salt and ploughing. The Council was surprised at the expense and asked Ms. Boa to discuss with Rolling Acres a few unexpected extras that should be taken off our bill: salting on the sledding hill at Yale Avenue and hand shoveling that happened at several residents’ homes.

Ms. Boa is getting bids for two projects: raising the sidewalk around Harvard and University Avenues to keep stormwater out of yards there; and repairing the iron fence around Town Hall. She has also created a new blog on the Town’s website.

Town Expenses
In February, the Town paid $9,291 to Rolling Acres and $1,043 to Bolt Legal. —EMILY PARSONS

Raymonde Uy, Tasha Tan, and daughter Iris moved into 6000 Bryn Mawr Avenue in the darkest and coldest days of the year but have quickly made themselves at home, connecting with neighbors and settling into their new house.

Raymonde and Tasha grew up spending time in both California and the Philippines, where they met while pursuing dual medical and business degrees. Their degree program had a strong public health focus, training doctors who would make changes beyond the individual patients they treat. That unique academic credential led them to postgraduate training at NIH. There, their careers shifted in the direction of technology and automation in medicine.

Raymonde works as a physician informaticist at the National Association of Community Health Centers, a non-profit organization that advocates for health centers caring for underserved patients in rural and urban communities around the country. He works at the intersection of clinical medicine, computer science, and information technology, harmonizing and harnessing health data to improve care for patients and to create structural changes that modernize the health care system.

Tasha is a clinical research associate physician at a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company that develops and sponsors immunotherapy and gene therapy clinical trials for blood cancers, solid tumors, and rare genetic diseases. She develops, monitors, and manages complex multicenter gene therapy clinical trial protocols, research data, and patients at the MD Anderson Cancer Center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Duke University, City of Hope Medical Center, and the NIH.

Both are working from home now and spend some late nights (thanks to the time difference) mentoring students at their medical school in the Philippines—encouraging them to consider public health and technology careers as complements to their medical training.

Outside of work, Raymonde and Tasha are really into food. Our conversation veered seamlessly into restaurants with good carryout options, the best kimchi brands, and plans to make Chinese hotpot when the weather warms up a bit. They also play video games, particularly enjoying cooperative and strategy games.

Iris has settled into online school as a first grader at Bannockburn. She’s in the same virtual—and perhaps soon, physical—classroom with a bevy of other Glen Echo kids. She’s loving the fun and freedom of having playmates practically at her doorstep. The family also recently welcomed Luna, a Siberian Neva Masquerade cat who is settling in her new home after hiding in a box spring for a few days.

—ANGELA HIRSCH
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‘Doggone Dependable Since 1898’
A 1997 court decision put the management of three historical but decrepit trestles of the Glen Echo trolley line in the hands of Washington Metro Area Transit Authority. There is a trestle at Foundry Branch just west of Georgetown University, one by the Sycamore Store at Walhonding Rd, and the other is at the west end of Glen Echo’s right-of-way. WMATA is proposing to remove all three bridges in what seems to be a piecemeal approach.

February 22 was the first public meeting with WMATA to discuss their plans to demolish and remove the abandoned trolley trestle near Radcliffe Lane. WMATA’s project manager, Jim Ashe, stated that the demolition is motivated by the trestle being a structurally-unsound safety hazard. WMATA is currently in the design phase of the project, with a timeline that puts deconstruction into the spring of 2022, lasting for an estimated three months.

Trestle deconstruction would start by removing the timbers, then the metal framework, then the supporting concrete abutments. The bridge would be packed into dumpsters which would then go to a staging area at Wilson and MacArthur. Equipment would be brought in from both sides of the bridge with plenty of disturbance and multiple staging areas. Trees would need to be removed, slopes stabilized, stream sedimentation prevented, WSSC septic pipes protected (at least one runs in the streambed below the trestle), and the area would need to be reforested. The canal-access path by the one-lane bridge would be closed for the duration of construction.

Many impacted residents were on the call, and most of their questions were left unanswered. WMATA presented a sketch of a plan, but it was clear that they have more drafting to do. They did not have a cost estimate to share; they have not yet coordinated with WSSC; they are still in permitting with the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service; they don’t know what they will do to stabilize the slopes; they don’t know how many trees will be removed; and they have not yet sought permission from the Town of Glen Echo. To that last point, the full scope of what the Town will be asked to approve is unclear though it seems at a minimum, permission to use Town roads is needed. A follow-up public meeting was agreed to in about one month’s time. —PETE EPANCHIN
When I moved with my extended family from downtown DC to Glen Echo in 2014, we all looked forward to establishing a closer connection to nature in the leafy Maryland suburbs. But unfortunately, since we arrived we’ve watched our Town become considerably less leafy.

It could be that the recent loss of one of the grand veteran oaks on Vassar Circle has triggered my melancholy thoughts. Why, the very week we moved in on lower Bryn Mawr, a towering elm tree next door was taken down, with no prior notice. Paging through past issues of The Echo reveals a steady progression of tree removal:

In August 2015, Pepco cut down dozens of large and mid-sized trees in our right-of-way along MacArthur. From 2016–2019, multiple trees were removed from land that was sold for development on lower Cornell, including a significant willow oak. (Google Street View still shows—at press time anyway—the undeveloped lots if you are curious to see!) In March 2018, a large pine between Wellesley and Bryn Mawr blew down during a windstorm. 2019 saw the loss of an large black walnut on lower Bryn Mawr, and the removal of two huge old sycamores on Harvard. There are more I can think of, but you get the idea: Lots of trees have come down and it’s easy to find many large stumps if you look carefully around Town.

Trees have a life cycle, and there are legitimate reasons for their removal. Land gets cleared for construction, or powerlines are in the way. And some of our largest veteran trees might even be approaching the end of their natural life spans (although I recently read that sycamores can live 600 years). But it’s clear that the Town’s lost trees aren’t being replaced, certainly not in the numbers neccessary to maintain a lush canopy.

So my pitch is this: I urge my neighbors to think about planting more trees! The aesthetic appeal is my main motivator—imagine walking down a shady tree-lined University Avenue.

But there are many other incentives: Large shade trees provide habitat for birds and...
other creatures, and they add curb appeal to boot! It also turns out that planting and maintaining urban forests is a low-tech and effective thing we can do to fight climate change (particularly if we plant a trillion of them, according to CNN!).

Closer to home though, a large shade tree on the south or west side of your house will lower your summer utility bills, which is why Pepco has a program to give away free shade tree saplings to their customers. Our County also has a program, Tree Montgomery, which we’ve heard gives away somewhat more mature shade trees and will even plant them for you.

There are lots of stretches around Town that are clear of power lines (such as the northeast side of University Avenue) and in dire need of big shady trees! Yes, it can take many many years for trees to get large enough to make an impact. That’s why we should plant the biggest trees we can afford!

Consider this: we live among some beautiful mature trees that are here just because some of our neighbors took the initiative years ago. In the early 1980s, Glen Echo residents Holly Shimizu and Brockie Stevenson created the Glen Echo Tree Committee and managed to get then-Mayor Fred Custer to allot them a generous budget for planting trees. Holly was working at the U.S. National Arboretum at the time, and got permission to salvage a couple of Zelkova trees from the Arboretum dumpster. One now stands regally over our Post Office, and the other graces the top of Harvard Avenue.

Isn’t it time we rise to the occasion again? Whether the Town can budget for some strategic tree planting, or a new Tree Committee takes on fundraising, or individual residents commit to the expense of planting shade trees in their yards themselves … why wait?

—MARY PARSONS

Tree Montgomery: www.treemontgomery.org/request-a-tree/
See page 9 for a list of Holly Shimizu’s tree recommendations.
Bethesda's Point Performance Welcomes Dr. Marc Gruner

Dr. Gruner, a Mayo Clinic trained sports medicine physician, is pleased to return to serve the Bethesda community where he was born & raised, offering cutting edge services for non-surgical orthopedic care:

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One of the most appealing aspects of our beautiful town is its large, interesting trees. As trees are removed, it is critical that we replant so that our community continues to reap their many benefits.

Trees that have a long-life span, like oaks, tend to grow more slowly than short-lived trees such as cherries. Please, don’t plant a crepe myrtle—they are being overplanted. Monocultures are not beneficial, while a diversity of plants is. Here is my list of great performing, beautiful trees for Glen Echo. I have listed the trees in order of their size and included a bit of information about each of my choices. Heights are estimates only since it depends where the tree is growing. This list comprises some of my favorites, most of which I have grown successfully. However, the list is by no means comprehensive.

**Pagoda Dogwood** *(Cornus alternifolia), 12–20 feet tall*

It is the horizontal layering habit of this dogwood that makes it so exquisite. The tiered appearance with upturned branches resulted in the name of pagoda dogwood. This plant has excellent wildlife value, lovely white flowers, gorgeous whorled leaves, and a deep red-purple color in autumn.

**Fringetree** *(Chionanthus virginicus), 12–20 feet tall*

During its spring bloom, the fringe tree appears as a big cloud of fragrant white flowers. It needs at least six or more hours of sunlight per day. The flowers attract pollinators, and the fruit is enjoyed by songbirds.

**Sweetbay Magnolia** *(Magnolia virginiana), 12–20 feet tall*

Known for its lemon scented, creamy white flowers and attractive leaves with a silvery underside, sweetbay can be planted near a patio. This particular magnolia is grown for its elegant, multi-stemmed habit and its compact size. It grows well with sun or partial shade and tolerates wet soils, which makes it ideal for rain gardens. In autumn, the dark red fruit expose gorgeous bright red seeds.

**Sourwood** *(Oxydendrum arboreum), 20–30 feet tall*

This tree is in the same family as azaleas and needs similar conditions—an acid, well-drained soil. It can tolerate some shade. Sourwood is beloved for its beautiful drooping white flowers which appear in late spring. The flowers resemble the lily-of-the-valley.

**Ironwood** *(Ostrya virginiana), 25–40 feet tall*

The most striking aspect of the ironwood (also called hop hornbeam) is the attractive pendulous fruit which is 1 ½ –2 ½ inches long and looks like dried hops fruit with inflated overlapping sacs that appear in late summer. These sacs remain on the tree through winter. Ironwood leaves resemble the birch tree. This tree has a lovely, rounded crown with fine branches.

**Yellowwood** *(Cladrastis kentukea), 30–50 feet tall*

Sweet smelling, pendulous white flowers emerge in mid-spring followed by seed pods in the autumn. The flowers resemble those of wisteria except they are white. The vase shape of the yellowwood tree with its broad crown makes this a great street tree or garden plant.

**Tupelo** *(Nyssa sylvatica), 30–70 feet tall*

The tupelo tree is often planted around bodies of water because of its ability to tolerate very wet soils.

*(continued on page 11)*
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Although it is slow growing, the tupelo gradually grows into a magnificent large tree. It is most famous for its fiery, brilliant autumn colors as well as its wildlife value. Birds partake of the seeds, while bees love the nectar in the spring flowers.

**Swamp White Oak**  
(*Quercus bicolor*), 60–80 feet tall  
Described as the most noble oak, the swamp white oak makes a fine shade tree that is tolerant of a wide variety of soil conditions. It has high ecological value because it attracts songbirds, ground birds, water birds, and mammals. Many birds depend on the insect life that can be found in oak trees growing conditions of fertile, wet soils is why it thrives along the Potomac River. It is considered one of the most distinctive trees in Maryland due to its mottled brownish, green-grey and white peeling outer bark that exposes the stunning white inner bark. In spring, the Baltimore orioles and many other birds seek this tree out for nesting. Bird species including purple finch, gold finch, chickadees, and dark-eyed junco eat the seeds. During a wet spring, the American sycamore can get anthracnose and the leaves fall off. This is just a cosmetic issue as the leaves grow back and fully emerge by summer.

**Bald Cypress**  
(*Taxodium distichum*), 60–80 feet tall  
Bald cypress is a deciduous conifer which simply means that it loses its leaves in autumn after they have turned a brilliant coppery red. It is famous for the knees that grow at its base as seen in Louisiana and other wetland areas. These plants grow quickly in a variety of settings, and it has a lovely pyramidal form.

**American Sycamore**  
(*Platanus occidentalis*), 80–100 feet tall  
The American Sycamore is our Town tree! The optimal growing conditions of fertile, wet soils is why it thrives along the Potomac River. It is considered one of the most distinctive trees in Maryland due to its mottled brownish, green-grey and white peeling outer bark that exposes the stunning white inner bark. In spring, the Baltimore orioles and many other birds seek this tree out for nesting. Bird species including purple finch, gold finch, chickadees, and dark-eyed junco eat the seeds. During a wet spring, the American sycamore can get anthracnose and the leaves fall off. This is just a cosmetic issue as the leaves grow back and fully emerge by summer.

The ideal planting time for most trees is late March and April while the weather is cool and the soil is moist. Trees grace us with their beauty, the shade they provide, and their many essential benefits. Let’s plant for a greener, healthier future. —*HOLLY SHIMIZU*

*If you have trouble locating the trees listed here, please refer to these two sources for reliable descriptions of nurseries selling native trees:*  
[www.mdflora.org/nurseries.html](http://www.mdflora.org/nurseries.html)  
[www.choosenatives.org/location/native-nurseries/](http://www.choosenatives.org/location/native-nurseries/)

Join Capital Nature on March 4 from 12–1 PM for a presentation on tree species that thrive naturally in our area and how to select the right ones for a site. You’ll be introduced to organizations and government agencies that provide free expertise and even free trees! Tickets are free, but registration is required. Go to [www.caseytrees.org](http://www.caseytrees.org) for more information.
Through August, American University will be hosting a show called This Is a True Picture of How It Was of all 1,927 paintings that Raya Bodnarchuk did between 2013 and 2019. The physical show will hopefully be open by appointment in the spring at the Alper Initiative Gallery, but their Museum@Home site offers some of Raya’s work along with videos and interviews in the meantime. A catalogue of the show is available for purchase, and Raya says many of the paintings are of places in Glen Echo and its nearby environs. Raya was one of the first Artists in Residence at Glen Echo Park back in the 70s and then taught at Corcoran College of Art & Design for 33 years. This exhibition of gouaches began as advice for her students (“Do something you love every day”) and evolved into a chronicle of six years of her life.

A reminder from the Environmental Committee: The right-of-way is for all of us to enjoy. Please pick up after your dog, and please don’t dump ash in this common space that may be planted with more trees in the future.

The Ellis family (see New to Town, January 2021 issue) of Princeton Avenue has expanded with the birth of baby Sally on January 29. She joins big brother Grant, who just turned two on February 5. Welcome to our newest Glen Echoan!

The next Zoom Ladies Night will be Wednesday, March 31, at 8 PM. Login details to come.

In the last Echo, we said that the April issue

Our Town Park

Last month, GEPPAC launched a multi-faceted program to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Dentzel Carousel. A series of lectures on the history of the Carousel will occur over the next several months. The first, in conjunction with Black History Month, featured a presentation on the Civil Rights story of the Carousel highlighting the research by filmmaker, Ilana Trachtman. All of these events are available for viewing on the website.

www.glenechopark.org/carousel100.

You can get involved! Personal stories of riding the Carousel over the years are being collected in a partnership with Story Tapestries, a nonprofit arts service organization that specializes in empowering people’s voices through digital storytelling and other art forms. For more information, see the website.

Fundraising alert: Note that the Park’s annual Gala, which is usually held in the Spanish Ballroom in May, will not be happening this year. As a result, there will be a variety of fundraising appeals that will allow the public to participate in special events around the Carousel Anniversary. We hope that the Carousel will be up and running when it is safe to do so. —Martha Shannon

Have You Heard?

No. 1551: It Was Pink Fog, 2/26/18

No. 1755: Little Bear, 9/18/18 (Note: black and white reproduction doesn’t do justice to these small colorful paintings!)

Raya Bodnarchuk did between 2013 and 2019. The
would contain candidate statements and photos from everyone running in the upcoming Town election, but those deadlines are really too early. So, candidate materials will be due to The Echo by April 20 to run in the May issue. We’ll make sure residents get their Echos in time to read prior to the election.

**Real Estate**
Currently on the market are the next Vassar Circle home, #10, listed at $1,499,000 and the commercial property at 7370 MacArthur Boulevard listed at $2,750,000.

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**They Say it’s Your Birthday!**
March 5 Aaron Kraus, 14
March 5 Zachary Kraus, 14
March 11 Greta Hirsch, 10

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**We Want You!**
For those of you interested in running for Town Council, I thought it would be helpful to provide a sense of the experience and commitment you might expect if you get elected. As a Town Council member for over six years, my favorite part is responding to residents’ needs and ideas in a collaborative setting with the other Council Members, the Mayor, and Town Manager. The complexities of looking at state, county, and town rules and regulations and creating the best town we can be is at times a challenge but always interesting. The camaraderie we have on the Council is respectful and supportive, even when we disagree. As a town representative, there are also opportunities to participate in the Maryland Municipal League. The MML offers elected officials classes and meetings to learn about state and local government issues and processes if you are interested.

The scheduled time commitment for a Council Member is attending monthly Town Council meetings on the second Monday of every month. The hours are dependent on how many issues we discuss but in general the meetings run from 7 to 9:30 PM. Our meetings are on Zoom at this time, but they may return to Town Hall when it’s safe. As a council member, you receive a packet via email of the agenda and details regarding each item the Friday before the meeting and are encouraged to read them ahead of time. There can be additional meetings during the month outside of the regular ones such as the annual budget meeting, variances meetings, and other special issues. I have absolutely enjoyed my time thus far serving on the Town Council. If you haven’t attended a Council meeting, please do so, and I encourage those interested to think about representing the Town in the upcoming election. —Dia Costello

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**TOWN ELECTION DETAILS:** Glen Echo will have an election on May 3 for two Council seats and the Mayorship. The terms are four years. Those interested in running for any of these open seats must be at least 25 years old, a resident of the Town of Glen Echo for at least one year, and a registered voter in the Town. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen. Your written declaration of candidacy must be delivered by April 13 to Jan Shaut, Supervisor, Board of Elections, 6004 Harvard Ave., Glen Echo, MD 20812. Residents 18 years and older may vote, and you can register when you come to vote—proof of residency may be requested. Absentee ballots will be provided to anyone who requests one (contact Jan at JShaut@gmail.com prior to the election).
10, 14, & 20 VASSAR CIRCLE, three more distinct homes in Glen Echo, Maryland

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- Two additional upper bedrooms and second floor laundry room
- Light-filled lower level rec room, bedroom and bath
- Bonus room for storage, home office, or gym

LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SALES: Kingman Development. Aaron Hirsch, Principal. An award-winning developer and Glen Echo resident with 20 years of experience in residential property development, design, and construction management.

ARCHITECTURE: Claude C. Lapp Architects, an award-winning firm with more than 35 years in the business.

Equal Housing Opportunity