

**HCA General Membership Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 1st, 2017 at 7:30 pm**

In the all purpose room at The Center for the Handicapped  
10501 New Hampshire Ave, Silver Spring, MD

*Doors open at 7:00pm*

*Meeting called to order at 7:33pm*

1. Introduction & Agenda from Margie Goergen-Rood
  
2. HCA Announcements & Updates
  - HCA's speeding education campaign to remind neighbors and visitors to drive safer began with signs along Cresthaven Drive in West Hillandale. They will be moved soon to Hillandale Forest for several weeks. Suggestions for other streets should be sent to [programs@hillandale-md.org](mailto:programs@hillandale-md.org)
  
  - The Hillandale Holiday party was December 4th in the CHI center. Santa on the firetruck from the local Hillandale Volunteer FD was a big hit as always, along with live music from the Springbrook High Jazz Band. Thanks to all that attended and volunteered.
  
  - HCA will be mailing out a membership drive letter in the coming month. This will be the last chance to update your entry in the 2017 Community Directory before the early spring printing. All 2017 dues paying members at the time of printing will receive a copy of the Directory. Some extra copies of the Directory may be available on a first-come, first-served basis.
  
  - The new pavilion at the Hillandale Local Park has opened. HCA is planning a ribbon-cutting social for the spring.
  
  - The HCA website has seen some recent improvements including a section for Meeting Minutes and Advocacy.
  
3. Guest Speaker - Tom Hucker, representative for District 5 to the Montgomery County Council
  - Representative Hucker spoke in his opening remarks about a range of topics, including:
    - i. District 5 covers 200,000 residents in Takoma Park, Silver Spring, White Oak & Burtonsville

- ii. He serves on two standing committees
    1. Public Safety & Transportation
    2. Infrastructure, Energy & Environment
  - iii. The primary responsibility of council members is management of the \$5 billion county budget
    1. Over half of of the budget goes to the school system, largely considered the crown jewel of Montgomery County.
    2. Discussions and decisions on the 2018 budget happen over the next couple months.
    3. In the 2017 budget, the council focused some additional investment in schools for intervention and early education programs, which seems to be paying off. As well as some other investment he was proud of:
      - a. Improvements to local libraries, including additional hours and a remodel of White Oak Library
      - b. No cuts to services for housing enforcement, stump removal, EMT's, street maintenance
      - c. Hiring additional police officers & firemen, and adding police body cameras
      - d. Additional funding for road resurfacing & rehabilitation; and bus stop improvements.
  - iv. In addition to handling the budget, the council has also passed legislation, including:
    1. Sick leave legislation, requiring paid sick leave for county employees
    2. Parental use of paid leave legislation, that requires employees to be allowed to use paid leave for parental purposes
    3. Additional bills on child health and combating human trafficking
- During the Q&A portion, Rep. Hucker engaged with Hillandale Residents in discussions on a wide range of topics including:
    - i. Short-term Rentals (aka "AirBnB"): There is a bill before council to allow short-term rentals, which are mostly illegal under current law. The difficulty is in defining the situations that are reasonable for a community. At the moment the legislation is awaiting a Planning Department report; it is expected to recommend allowing short-term

rentals for owner-occupied residences, impose limited time periods, and include requirements for licensing, safety & parking.

1. Feedback from the Community included examples of reasonable owner occupied cases, and some examples of problem cases. Additional concerns from residents were voiced about the AirBnB rentals getting around hotel safety regulations. There was concern about crowded rentals, and the changes to a neighborhood when a larger portion of it is used for transient rentals. Additionally, there was significant concern with the level of enforcement even when complaints are made.
  2. Rep. Hucker offered to call county agencies on our behalf, or even propose new legislation if we provide ideas and details to his office. Additionally, he mentioned that there is a new bill underway to add transparency to the DHCA inspection process.
- ii. Problem houses in Hillandale with numerous violations and complaints. In particular, one house that has been reported and cited by DHCA & DPS, but is still violating a number of regulations. Ultimately, Rep. Hucker offered to reach out to county agencies on our behalf if we contact his office in addition to the county departments. He also recommended that neighbors attend the court hearings to encourage that the penalties imposed are sufficient.
  - iii. Issues with local grocery standards, including food freshness, service and trash removal. Rep. Hucker offered to reach out to the owners of the shopping center & the corporate store itself. There is a larger issue of grocery closings in the East County region.
  - iv. Concerns regarding the White Oak Local Area Transportation (LATR) Improvements Program, which is under discussion with the Council and proposes specific goals for transportation in this area. Rep. Hucker offered to advocate in the LATR discussions if we can work with him to propose amendments.
  - v. On-street parking causing safety concerns. Rep. Hucker indicated that the county had no current additional legislation, but was open to looking at options to limit the number of cars per house, street parking, or widening of streets if an advocate would like to reach out to his office.

- vi. Increasing employment opportunities in East County. The hope is that the focus on new developments will help, but Rep. Hucker is open to any ideas, including those that would improve schools and housing to encourage business.
- In his closing remark, Representative Hucker expressed again that he hopes for continued direct engagement on the issues that concern Hillandale. Please contact him directly at [councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:councilmember.hucker@montgomerycountymd.gov) or 240-777-7960.
  - i. Also, he asks that we report vacant properties to his office in support of a new bill. The bill would create a registry of vacant properties in order to improve the effective enforcement of existing regulations.

#### 4. Closing Remarks from Margie Goergen-Rood

- As always, anyone wishing to work on an issue for the community is welcome to engage the HCA Board for additional support & resources.

*Meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.*

*A staff member from Rep. Hucker's office remained after to hear additional details from Community residents.*

#### Board Members for 2016-17:

Margie Goergen-Rood (President), Shana Davis-Cook (VP), Andrew Harris (VP-Programs), Ken Harringer (Treasurer), Heather Thomas (Secretary/Membership), Luann Spiller (Past-President/Housing), Jeff McNeil (At-Large OH), Virgil Tudor (At-Large WH), Tom Helfand (At-Large WH/Schools), Ava Penny (At-Large HF), Ross Sutton (Bulletin/Garden), Kimberly Pfirrmann-Powell (Historian/Membership), Phyllis Solomon (Nat. Resources), Clay Teunis (Watch), Russ Harris (Web), Kay Taub (Greeter), Eileen Finnegan (Zoning), Bill Thomas (Development)