

**HCA General Membership Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 27th, 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 7:30pm*

HCA Board President Margie Goergen-Rood introduced the evening's speakers and the discussion facilitator and Hillandale resident, Mr. Rich Romer.

**Traffic Calming and Concerns**

Rich Romer explained that an informal survey that was circulated to the community over the summer to gauge residents' primary concerns related to traffic. Responses primarily focused on speeding and cut-through traffic. Mr. Romer explained that this meeting is in follow-up to the survey to establish a list of strategies/remedies that should be pursued to address speeding, cut-through and other traffic-related concerns.

Kursheed Bilgrami from Montgomery County's Department of Transportation (DOT) stated that he had reviewed the responses to the community survey, which seemed to be primarily focused on cut-thru traffic and speeding.

- Relief for cut-through traffic—There has been a surge due to the use of GPS apps on smartphones, which detour drivers onto residential streets. MoCo does have access restriction programs which can be pursued. The regulation includes a process to obtain right and left turn restrictions during peak hours. These restrictions apply universally--not only to commuters, but also to those who live within the community. Implementation requires meeting specific thresholds for non-community drivers. Those who live within 4,000 square feet of the intersection are not classified as "cut-thru" traffic. The study for these restrictions includes a calculation for volume and tag-reader technology to determine the addresses of the drivers to establish the 4,000 sq. ft. area. Once the area/intersection meets the thresholds, the proposed restrictions are subject to a public hearing process. 215 non-community vehicles/hour must be achieved to qualify for further consideration. After the public hearing it will be determined by DOT whether the request will be approved. There are only two MVA approved DOT staffers who are permitted to make a decision on access restriction requests. This is approximately a year-long process.

Mr. Bilgrami noted that a community in the Four Corners area requested an access restriction, which was ultimately resisted by the residents once they realized that it would apply to them as well as to commuters. He urged HCA to ensure that the community understands and supports such an access restriction before it is pursued.

Those in attendance commented regarding increases in traffic on this side of the county. Some felt that this was partly attributable to the FDA headquarters on New Hampshire Avenue. Others highlighted development decisions made by the county and state as the sources for the increases in east-county traffic.

Jewru Bandeh, Director of Montgomery County's Eastern Regional Office, offered to have county representatives come back at a future HCA meeting to discuss the transportation impact of the local developments including transportation-related capital projects such as bike networks, BRT, etc. Mr. Bandeh noted that there are the traffic studies undertaken in relation to these development projects and that the county is seeking to improve traffic congestion by undertaking multi-modal options to promote bicycle and mass transit use.

- County process for the installation of speed humps on residential streets—Mr. Bilgrami explained that there are various traffic calming measures utilized in the county such as speed humps, traffic circles, traffic islands, curb extensions, chokers, etc. Information regarding these options is available online. He noted that the most effective of these options is the use of speed humps. For a roadway to qualify for a speed hump:
  - The 85th percentile of vehicles must be traveling in excess of 7 MPH above the posted speed limit
  - The length of the roadway must be a minimum of 1,000 feet
  - There must be a minimum of 100 vehicles per hour during peak hours.

The placement of speed humps is also limited by the topography of the roadway and whether there are drastic bends/curves in the roadway segment. A speed study is performed after it is determined that the roadway itself meets the design requirements. The process for review, study, public meetings and final decision is a year-long process.

Those in attendance commented that in addition to cut-through and speeding drivers, there is also the issue of drivers failing to obey STOP signs. Mr. Bilgrami advised that this is an enforcement issue.

### **Traffic Enforcement**

Montgomery County Police Sergeant Kerry Moore (Traffic Squad) and Third District Community Service Officer Melissa Coligan discussed the Third District's enforcement efforts.

Sergeant Moore stressed the need for the community to submit concerns/complaints regarding traffic problems to the local police. The police department's first step is to educate drivers. They use electronic message boards that also capture speeds and volume. Sometimes the data does not reflect residents' perception of a speeding problem. If a speeding issue is found than officers are deployed to perform speed enforcement. This is only effective during the time the officer is present. Officers are typically directed to focus speed enforcement efforts along major arterials, such as New Hampshire Avenue. There are 7 traffic units assigned to the Third (Silver Spring) District with one unmarked vehicle. With limited resources, they must target resources as they will be the most effective. Randolph/29, Woodside, etc. neighborhoods which have current access restrictions get spikes in enforcement from time to time. Sergeant urged attendees to report illegal parking and other traffic-related issues when the violations are initially seen so they can respond in a timely manner when the violations is likely to still be present. The traffic-enforcement units have been doing high visibility enforcement during the month of September along New Hampshire Avenue within and beyond Hillandale. This entails two officers looking for speeding and aggressive driving.

In summary: 1. Report specific observations to county police/DOT when the problem is occurring. 2. Community education. 3. Keep in mind that these issues are not unique to Hillandale and are county-wide.

An attendee asked if the police department can perform a traffic study without deploying the message board. Sergeant Moore responded that while they can do that, it is more time-consuming and lacks the public education piece, which is one of the department's objectives. There was discussion regarding the appropriateness of the residential speed limits in the community and the speakers advised that this is set by the State of Maryland.

Officer Coligan explained that the Third District has additional patrol units in addition to the traffic squad. Calls are triaged and parking and traffic complaints fall below other more serious calls for service. She noted that no. 1 crime in our area is theft from vehicles.

Officer Coligan advised that on the 2nd Wednesday of every month there is a community training at the Silver Spring Station in the community room. It is advertised through NextDoor and the next training is October 11 at 7:00 p.m. All local residents are encouraged and welcome to attend.

In conclusion, Ms. Goergen-Rood advised that HCA would schedule a future meeting regarding traffic issues related to the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan.

### **School Issues**

Ms. Goergen-Rood introduced Mary Myers-Nelson, HCA's new Schools Committee Chair. Ms. Myers-Nelson stated that she has already reached out to local cluster of schools and is looking forward to serving as the community representative advocating on behalf of the local schools. She welcomed others who are interested in working on issues related to the schools to reach out to her.

### **Park Pavilion Celebration**

Tentatively scheduled for Spring 2018.

### **Community Signage Regarding Speeding**

Mr. Andrew Harris, HCA's Vice President for Programs advised that the speed warning signs purchased by HCA were continuing to be rotated throughout the community and that Cresthaven and Schindler are up next. Suggestions for future locations are welcomed, however, volunteers are needed. Attendees requested that more signs be purchased and that they remain up for longer durations. Mr. Harris responded that HCA could purchase them for buy-back by members of the community to post in front of their home. He noted that the HCA's objective is to saturate certain streets for a limited timeframe so that drivers don't become numb to their effect. HCA will pursue purchasing additional additional signs in bulk that can then be sold back to interested residents. -

### **Annual Holiday Party**

Sunday, December 3, 2017, from 5-7 PM at the CHI Center, 10531 New Hampshire Avenue. This is a potluck event and there will be visits from Santa escorted by firefighters from the local station.

### **Special Meeting Regarding FDA Headquarters**

A joint meeting with the North White Oak Citizens Association is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11 from 7-8:30 PM at the CHI Center regarding FDA's pending plans to expand development on their property. The presentation will be given by the the General Services Administration (GSA), which manages federal agency development and expansion projects.

### **Resident Directory**

The latest directory has been delayed as HCA sourced a new printer after CHI ceased its in-house printing operation this past summer. The directory is now at the new printer and should arrive within the next two weeks.

### **Hillandale Local Park**

A concern was expressed regarding the condition of the wood playset and it being unsafe and a potential hazard. HCA will pass this concern along to the Parks Department.

### **Disposition of Court Hearing on Code Violations at a Hillandale home**

At the request of attendees, Ms. Goergen-Rood summarized the court's orders regarding the five issued citations for code violations at the property:

- the stone wall needs to be inspected and approved by DPS. *30-day compliance required*
- the abatement order for heavy commercial vehicles on the property was not remedied by the owners. *The court imposed a fine for failure to comply*
- a 6-month extension was granted for the removal of the existing shed to allow the owners to obtain applicable permits to build a new garage
- the owners were given 30 days to remove building materials from property

*Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.*

Board Members for 2017-19:

Margie Goergen-Rood (President), Kimberly Pfirmann-Powell (VP), Andrew Harris (VP-Programs), Ken Harringer (Treasurer), Heather Thomas (Secretary), Luann Spiller (Past-President), Jeff McNeil (At-Large OH), Virgil Tudor (At-Large WH), Tom Helfand (At-Large WH), Ava Penny (At-Large HF), Lillie Brown (At-Large HF), Ross Sutton\* (Bulletin/Garden), Mary Myers-Nelson, Clay Teunis (Watch), Russ Harris (Web), Eileen Finnegan (Zoning), Bill Thomas (Developer Liason), Shana Davis-Cook (Bylaws)

*Minutes prepared by Shana Davis-Cook*